Bengaluru Sunday, January 4, 2026 Pages 22 Vol 79 No 4 ₹8

DH on Sunday

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DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Siraj returns for NZ series

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Travel *Page18*

Slow journeys

From the Northern Lights in Finland to the stunning beauty of Tasmania, choose experiences that are transformative

Art & Pursuits *Page20*

Sombre reflections

Award-winning photographer Saibal Das has captured stunning images of Hampi in all its grim stillness

Books *Page17*

Rail tales

Amitava Kumar's meditation on Indian Railways blends insight and nostalgia but falters now and then

Food & Drink *Page19*

Varanasi calling

Explore the city's culinary heritage through its many GI-tagged foods, including tiranga barfi and the famed paan

US strikes Venezuela, captures Prez

Trumps says US will run country; Maduro, wife to face trial in New York

NEW YORK TIMES

President Donald Trump said Saturday that the United States had captured Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and was taking him to New York to face criminal charges, the stunning culmination of a months-long campaign by his administration to oust the authoritarian leader. The US would "run" the country until a proper transition of power could be arranged, the president said hours later, raising the prospect of an open-ended commitment.

Trump offered few details about how the US would oversee Venezuela, saying only that an unspecified "group" would do so. It was not clear whether that would involve an occupying military force, although Trump said he was not afraid of "boots on the ground".

Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodríguez had spoken to Secretary of State Marco Rubio and told him she was "essentially willing to do what we think is necessary," Trump told reporters during a news conference at Mar-a-Lago, his private club in Florida. But Rodríguez earlier denounced the US operation on state television, calling it a "brutal attack".

Hours after Trump announced the military assault that captured Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, Attorney General Pam Bondi said on social media that they had been indicted on drug and weapons charges and "will soon face the full wrath of American justice". The charges were similar to those contained in a 2020 indictment that the Trump administration has repeatedly cited in calling Maduro the head of a "narco-terrorist" state.

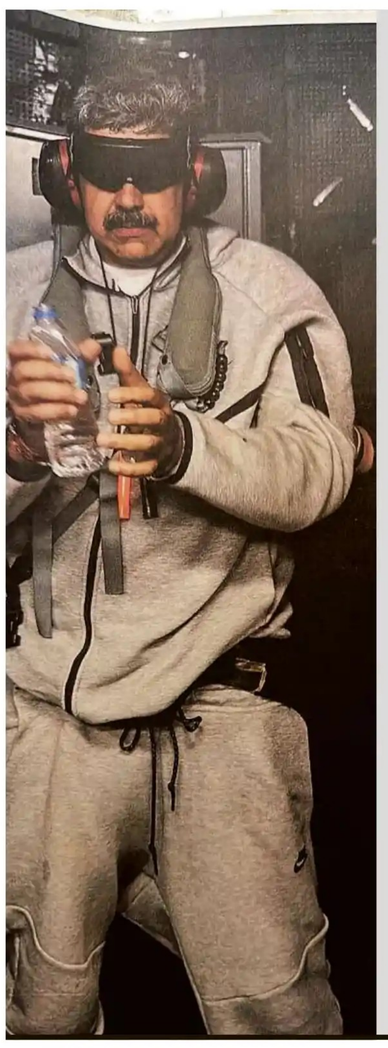
US Special Operations forces captured Maduro with the help of a CIA source within the Venezuelan government who had monitored his location in recent days, according to people briefed on the operation. Trump posted an image of Maduro in custody aboard the USS Iwo Jima, one of the American warships that have been prowling the Caribbean, and said he and his wife would be taken to New York.

The swift military operation came after months of threats, warnings and accusations of drug smuggling by Trump against Maduro. Trump said that no US troops had been killed but suggested in an interview with Fox News that some had been injured when their helicopter was hit.

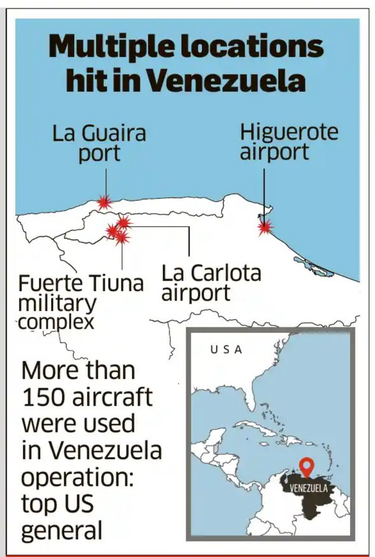
In a brief phone interview with *The New York Times* after the announcement, Trump celebrated the mission. "A lot of good planning and lot of great, great troops and great people," he said. "It was a brilliant operation, actually."

A statement from the Venezuelan communications ministry condemned the attack. Venezuela "rejects, repudiates and denounces" US military aggression, the ministry said.

It called on "all social and political forces in the country to activate mobilisation plans and repudiate this imperialist attack".



(Clockwise from left) A photo shared by Trump purportedly shows a blindfolded Maduro; smoke rises from explosions in Caracas; Venezuelans celebrate US action.



How it unfolded

- Explosions rock Caracas around **2 am** (local time)
- Venezuela's largest military complex and an airbase near Caracas attacked
- Maduro was captured from a highly guarded "fortress"
- US Special Forces take Maduro and his wife to US warship Iwo Jima

WHAT'S NEXT

- Maduro and and his wife Cilia Flores indicted in New York court
- By law, Vice President Delcy Rodriguez should take power, but there is no confirmation
- Senior Oppn leader Edmundo Gonzalez should assume Presidency, says Oppn activist and Nobel Peace laureate Maria Machado
- Trump says US is going to be "very strongly involved" in Venezuela's oil industry

This was one of the most stunning, effective and powerful displays of American military might and competence in American history...We'll be involved in it (Venezuela) very much. We can't take a chance in letting somebody else run and just take over what he left, or left off

DONALD TRUMP
US President

Venezuelans, the HOUR OF FREEDOM has arrived! Today we are ready to enforce our mandate and take power. Let us remain vigilant, active, and organised until the democratic transition is realised. A transition that needs ALL of us

MARIA CORINA MACHADO
Venezuelan opposition leader

Faced with the criminal aggression committed by the US government against our homeland, we have requested an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council, which is responsible for upholding international law

YVAN GIL
Venezuelan Foreign Minister

Avoid all non-essential travel to Venezuela: India

India on Saturday night advised its nationals to avoid all non-essential travel to Venezuela. "In view of recent developments in Venezuela, Indian nationals are strongly advised to avoid all non-essential travel to Venezuela," the MEA said. "All Indians who are in Venezuela for any reason are advised to exercise extreme caution and remain in contact with the Embassy of India in Caracas."

INSIDE, PAGE 11

- Maduro's inner circle appears to survive
- Trump did not seek Congressional authorisation
- Global leftist leaders denounce US attack on Venezuela
- Maduro never escaped his predecessor's shadow

US allies, foes alarmed by capture of Maduro

The US operation that led to the capture of Maduro on Saturday sparked alarm across the international community, with allies and foes of Washington and Caracas expressing disquiet. Countries such as Russia and Iran, long-standing allies of Caracas, were quick to condemn the operation but their alarm was also shared by Washington's allies including France and the European Union.

Quickly

KKR releases Bangla pacer Mustafizur

As diplomatic tensions between India and Bangladesh continue to rise, cricket has once again found itself caught in the crossfire. Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman was released by IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders following a directive from the BCCI on Saturday. Bangladesh has been going through prolonged political unrest.

Details on Page 3

14 Maoists killed in Ch'garh ops

In the first Naxalite encounter of 2026, at least 14 Maoists, including wanted ultras Vetti Mangdu and Madvi Hunga, were killed in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh's Sukma and Bijapur districts in the Bastar region on Saturday, officials said. Meanwhile, CPI (Maoist) senior commander Barse Deva surrendered before the Telangana Police along with 15 other cadres.

Details on Page 3

Illegal migration: Dreams abroad, dangers along the way

In North Gujarat, many families seek overseas opportunities while grappling with debt, deportation and human traffickers

SATISH JHA
MEHSANA/GANDHINAGAR, DHNS

Indian migrants, their hands cuffed, undergo screening as they line up to board a flight in Panama in September 2024. AFP

Twenty-seven-year-old Samarth Patel has never set foot outside the country, yet he can name several cities in the United States. Sitting at a *dhaba* along the highway connecting Mansa town in Gandhinagar district to Mehsana, he said, "Most of my family members are settled in St Louis, Missouri — some run liquor stores, some work as salespersons. I wish to join them but haven't applied for a visa yet. The rules are strict now. A rejection would mean the end of the road."

INSIGHT

Samarth, who has discontinued his Bachelor of Commerce studies after the second year, said that the deportation of Gujaratis from the US earlier this year had spread fear. He added that one of his distant relatives was among those who were sent back.

"He is in serious trouble, with debts mounting from the money he spent to enter the US illegally and is also facing social stigma. He had gone there with the help of local agents who have connections in America and must have spent between Rs 1 crore and Rs 2 crore. He seems to be stuck now," Samarth said.

When asked if he would take that route to reach Missouri like his relative, he said, "Never ever."

The deportation of Indians including Gujaratis from the US earlier this year has changed the migration calculus for aspirants like Samarth. Once drawn to the "dollar dream" of the United States, locals are now increasingly eyeing European nations such as Germany, Portugal and Spain, where relatives have already settled or where there is a perceived demand for skilled and unskilled workers. Human-trafficking cases and the risk of falling into debt or danger abroad have made the journey more clandestine, even as aspirations remain high in north Gujarat's migrant-heavy districts.

Illegal migration often occurs because there are not enough opportunities, and most do not have the skills needed to secure a legal work visa.

Punjab and Haryana are also among those states with significant reports of illegal immigration but what sets Gujarat apart is the close-knit connection between the region and those who receive these 'illegal or undocumented aliens' as they are referred to in the US.

In Gujarat, migration, including illegal, is reported to be high among the Patidar community, which has a sizeable number of diaspora in the US. Over the decades, Patidar-dominated villages migrated en masse, and many of these individuals or groups are reported to be helping the newcomers by offering support. "All you have to do is to reach there and the community stands as a rock solid support", is a common reference point among the aspirants.

Earlier, in January and February 2025, visuals of Indians being deported on US military planes with their hands tied sparked widespread controversy. The impact continues to be felt on the ground in the Gandhinagar and Mehsana districts of north Gujarat, from where a majority of the Gujarat-origin deportees hailed.

In Manekpur Dabhala village, a group of residents told *DH* that "no one wants to use the dunki route now". The dunki route refers to a networked illegal migration pathway to the US and other countries through multiple transit nations.

▸ Illegal migration, Page 2

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B.Com (Hons) CMA
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B.Com (Hons) CFA

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M.Sc. Psychology

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LLM

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Europe beckons, risks multiply

A cross-border smuggling web

SATISH JHA
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

The Dingucha village tragedy, in which four members of a family froze to death in January 2022 while attempting to enter the US via the Canada border, brought illegal immigration from Gujarat into sharp focus. Following the incident, the police registered FIRs against those who had arranged the travel and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) initiated a probe under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

Further, the deportation of 330 Indians — most of them from Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat — in January and February 2025 prompted authorities in these states to intensify action against those involved in illegal migration. FIRs were registered across Punjab and Haryana, based on which the ED also launched investigations.

In a press release dated December 19, the ED's Jalandhar Zonal Office said search operations at 13 locations across Punjab, Haryana and Delhi in connection with the 'dunki route case' led to the seizure of Rs 4.68 crore in cash, gold bars worth Rs 8.07 crore, silver worth Rs 6.42 crore and several incriminating documents. During the search, 50 original passports belonging to third parties were also seized.

The ED stated that the investigation was initiated based on FIRs registered by the Punjab and Haryana police under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, and the Immigration Act, 1983.

Investigations revealed that travel agents, middlemen, "donkers," overseas associates, Hawala operators and those arranging lodging and logistics had a complex network.

According to the ED, migrants were sent through dangerous routes across several South American countries before illegally crossing into the US via the Mexico border. "Throughout the journey, people were tortured, extorted for additional money and forced to commit illegal acts," the ED said.

In Gujarat, the ED began its probe based on two FIRs registered by the state police and conducted raids in Ahmedabad, Delhi, Surat, Mehsana, Nagpur and other locations in the country.

The investigation found that the accused charged Rs 60–70 lakh per individual, Rs 1–1.25 crore per couple, and Rs 50 lakh for a child. To facilitate the process, they arranged admissions in Canadian colleges and applied for student visas. However, once the individuals reached Canada, they illegally crossed into the US instead of joining the institutions, leading to the refund of college fees to the students' accounts.

The ED identified two entities based in Mumbai and Nagpur that had agreements to secure admissions in foreign universities on a commission basis.

A police officer supervising the Dingucha case said the biggest challenge for investigators is the reluctance of victims to pursue legal cases. In the Dingucha case, relatives of the deceased did not file a complaint, forcing the state government to step in as the complainant. Subsequent investigations revealed that the victims' brother was involved in a separate human smuggling racket.

Similarly, in a 2023 case where a family of four was kidnapped in Tehran and released after paying ransom, the victims were unwilling to pursue the matter. "I have four to five cases where victims cheated under the pretense of being sent to the US want their money back but refuse to file an FIR," an investigating officer said.

Illegal migration, from Page 1

These are also dangerous routes. In 2023, a family of four from the village drowned in the St Lawrence river along the US–Canada border while attempting to reach the US illegally.

In response to a question in the Rajya Sabha in March, the Ministry of External Affairs stated that between January and February 2025, a total of 388 Indian nationals were deported to India.

Of these, 333 were deported directly from the US after verification, while 55 were deported via Panama. The highest numbers were from Punjab (126), Haryana (110), and Gujarat (74).

The ministry noted that "from 2009 to 2024, a total of 15,564 Indian nationals were deported by the US through chartered and commercial flights." The ministry also stated that the US has been carrying out such operations for a long time.

Although there is no official data, local accounts suggest that apprehensions at the US border have reduced. US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) data released in October revealed that 34,146 Indian nationals were detained trying to enter the country illegally between October 2024 and September 2025, compared to 90,415 in the previous fiscal year.

Detained migrants are either deported immediately or held in immigration detention centres until the deportation process is completed.

On December 4, the Department of Homeland Security stated, "Preliminary data shows both US Border Patrol apprehensions and total CBP encounters declined from October to November, making this the lowest number of encounters for the start of a fiscal year in history."

Shift in focus

DH travelled across Gandhinagar and Mehsana, where a large number of locals have settled in the US. Billboards, posters and banners put up by travel agents to attract aspirants continue to line roads.

"I think the Donald Trump administration's crackdown on illegal immigration has impacted a lot," said Manish Sharma, who runs Akshar Travels, in Ahmedabad.

Dipak Patel from Akhaj village runs a chain of liquor stores in Missouri. He moved to the US in 2009 to join his elder brother. "I am an overseas citizen of India. A total of 56 family members have settled there," he said, declining to name the liquor chain or give any other specific information.

He spoke about stricter US immigration policies, including tighter H-1B visa rules and enforcement against illegal immigrants.

Nearly a year after visa restrictions were imposed in the US, many aspirants are said to have shifted their focus to European countries. In 2025, at least three Gujarat families attempting illegal settlement in the UK and Portugal were trapped by human traffickers and forced to pay hefty ransoms for release.

"There is a general perception among people that it is easy to settle in European countries such as Germany, Portugal and Spain, especially for those with relatives already there," a Patidar community leader, requesting anonymity, told *DH*. "Most of the illegal cases we come across involve people whose relatives are already settled there. They have a support system, which is why they attempt it," he added.

Kidnap nightmare

On November 29, Kismat Chavda, his wife Heena, and their three-year-old daughter flew from Ahmedabad to Dubai, aiming for Portugal. The family had long dreamed of settling in the European country, inspired by Kismat's brother who had settled there, working as a farm labourer.

In less than three days, the family's journey turned into a nightmare. After two days in Dubai, human traffickers, posing as travel agents, took them to Benghazi in Libya. Back in Badalpura village in Mehsana district, Kismat's uncle began receiving WhatsApp calls claiming that his nephew and family had been kidnapped, along with graphic videos of Kismat pleading for money, and demands for a Rs 2 crore ransom.

"After negotiations, they settled for Rs 85 lakh. We had to pay; government help would have taken too long," said Kismat's cousin Mahipat. With previous expenses of Rs 30 lakh, Kismat is now over Rs 1 crore in debt.

When *DH* visited his home in Badalpura village in Gandhinagar district on December 28, Kismat had left for Ahmedabad to visit a temple where his sister had made a vow for his safe return.

Kismat lives in a one-bedroom house, with separate spaces for a kitchen, washroom and backyard. Inside, steel utensils are neatly arranged, and family photos adorn the wall.

A school dropout, Kismat earned Rs 20,000-Rs 25,000 a month in a factory. "The family doesn't have any land or any other source of income. His brother earns in dollars and so he thought of taking a chance," said Kismat's uncle Kiran Chavda.

Similarly, in October 2025, four members of the Chaudhary family from Bapupura in Mansa were kidnapped in Tehran on their way to Australia. They were taken to Bangkok, Dubai and Tehran, where they were held captive.

In June 2023, another couple was kidnapped in similar fashion in Tehran. They were on their way to enter the US illegally. While they were released after government intervention, and allegedly after paying Rs 15 lakh to the kidnappers, a police case in Ahmedabad against the agent revealed the couple had promised to pay Rs 1.5 crore once they reached the US.

"In light of the deportation of illegal immigrants from the US and the various cases we have filed against the agents here, we can say that such incidents have decreased significantly. While we can't claim that these cases have stopped completely, there is now a clear deterrent," Virendra Singh Yadav, Inspector General of Police, Gandhinagar range police, told *DH*.

Why migration persists

North Gujarat, which has one of the highest numbers of migrants settled in the US, is largely dominated by the Patidar community, a highly influential electorate.

The region was the epicentre of the 2015–16 Patidar agitation for reservation, fueled by an agrarian crisis. Small, fragmented landholdings make agriculture unsustainable. While government jobs are still preferred, private industries cannot meet soaring employment demand.

Every year, non-resident Indians from the US fund temples, schools and community facilities, leaving plaques acknowledging donations in crores. For people like Samarth Patel, a monthly salary of Rs 25,000–30,000 seems inadequate, especially when stories of relatives sending money home in dollars abound.

These factors continue to fuel the aspiration to migrate, despite the risks involved.

Cross-border migration

24,600
Indians were deported from 81 countries in 2025, mainly from Saudi Arabia and the US, raising concerns of visa overstay, illegal migration and labour law violations

- Indian government does not maintain data on illegal outward migration and relies on data from destination countries during deportations
- Rising deportations and illegal migration fuel diplomatic tensions, security risks and social and legal challenges
- Over 1,000 Indians attempted to cross the English Channel in 2023 on small inflatable boats, pursuing jobs and asylum in the UK
- Deportations from Saudi Arabia are mainly due to visa overstays and labor law violations, not illegal border crossings

Why Indians risk illegal migration

Economic opportunity · Rural distress · Chasing a better life · Social networks · Pride in family abroad

Maximum deportations from Saudi Arabia

39,856 Deportations from **Saudi Arabia in 2021-2024**

7,019 Deportations from **Saudi Arabia in 2025 (till December)**

5,541 Indian nationals deported by the **US in 2020-24**

1,703 Indian nationals deported from the **US in 2025 (till July end)**

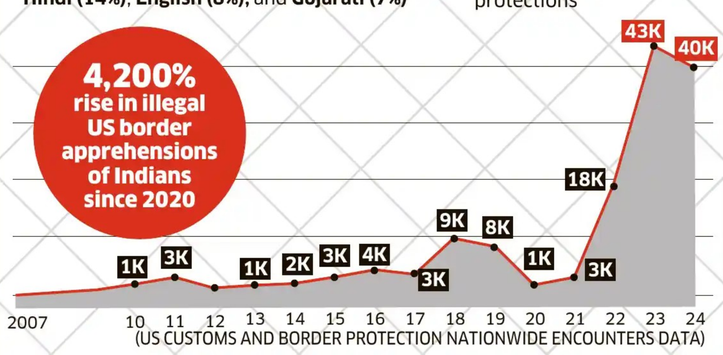
311 Indian nationals deported from the **UK in 2020-2024**

131 Indians deported from the **UK in 2025 (till July end)**

Illegal Indian entries to US soar

- Of the 332 undocumented Indian immigrants deported from the US in 2025, the largest shares were from

- In 2023, around **seven lakh undocumented immigrants** of Indian origin reached the US, ranking after those from **Mexico and El Salvador**
- Indian nationals apprehended at US borders surged from **1,000** in 2020 to **43,000** in 2023, before easing slightly to **40,000** in 2024
- Though most Indian migrants were still apprehended at the **US-Mexico border**, over a third of 2024 arrests took place at the **US-Canada border**
- From 2001 to 2022, Punjabi speakers made up **66% of Indian asylum seekers**, followed by **Hindi (14%)**, **English (8%)**, and **Gujarati (7%)**
- US law allows border-apprehended migrants to seek asylum if they fear persecution. Applications from Indian nationals surged from **5,000 in 2020** to **51,000 in 2023** after Biden-era policies expanded temporary protections



Illegal routes, real trouble

December 2025: **A Gujarat couple** and their three-year-old daughter were allegedly held hostage in Libya for a Rs 2 crore ransom while attempting illegal migration to Portugal

November 2025: **A Haryana man** trying to reach Europe via Belarus was allegedly assaulted and held hostage for ransom

November 2025: **Two men from Haryana and Punjab** using the 'dunki' route to reach US were reportedly abducted and killed by traffickers in Guatemala

March 2025: **A man from north Gujarat** died in Nicaragua while travelling to the US via an illegal route

October 2024: **An Indian migrant** died while illegally crossing the English Channel from France to the UK after the boat deflated

January 2022: **A family of four from Gujarat** froze to death at the US–Canada border while attempting illegal entry

What is the DUNKI ROUTE

The Dunki route, often called the donkey route, is an illegal migration path used by Indians to enter countries like the US, Canada and the UK without valid documents.
The word "Dunki" derived from Punjabi slang meaning "to jump" or "move from place to place," describes how migrants cross several international borders unlawfully. These journeys are often arranged by human trafficking networks that charge large sums of money to help migrants reach their destination.
Many choose this route due to the high cost, long processing times, and strict requirements of legal migration. This route puts migrants at risk of financial loss, physical danger and mental distress, with many facing harsh journeys, hunger and abuse along the way.
Most Indians using the Dunki route come from Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat.

Sources: Pew Research Centre, Rajya Sabha statement, research paper by Johns Hopkins University, IJFMR paper, Wikipedia, external affairs ministry, media reports

COMPILED BY
DIVYASHRI MUDAKAVI

DH GRAPHIC:
SAGAR M S

Have your say

To express your opinion, e-mail us at:
insight@deccanherald.co.in

Centre writes to Tamil Nadu to set up Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Tamil Nadu will no longer be able to refuse Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas after a Supreme Court ruling. The Union Ministry of Education has written to state officials asking for a meeting to facilitate this.

As the only state without any of these government-run schools, Tamil Nadu said till recently that these schools insisted on a three-language curriculum, which interfered with the state's two-language policy.

The Supreme Court, in a ruling on December 16, held that the state could not continue to refuse these schools, and asked for a concrete timeline within a fortnight to set them up.

The apex court also directed the state to calculate the land required for establishing such schools in each district.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 stipulates that teaching be done in three Indian languages in Classes 6-10, with two languages being Indian, while the curriculum in Classes 11 and 12 must be taught in two languages, with one being Indian. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) carried out a language-mapping exercise across its schools to find out the languages spoken most. It has yet to announce the findings.

Textbooks in different languages have been produced by the ministry only for Classes 6 and 7, and textbooks for Class 8 are being rolled out now.

A senior ministry official said that textbooks for Classes 9 and 10 were expected soon.

Letter to 6 states

The Central government has written to six states and Union Territories — Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Chhattisgarh — urging them to comply with its policy, as per the NEP 2020, that the minimum age of students in Class 1 be six years.

This is the second time the Union Ministry of Education is writing to states; it had written to them for the first time on this on February 9, 2023.

"We have written to these states; some of them have written back positively, giving us a clear timeframe. Chhattisgarh will adopt the change soon," said a ministry official.

As per the policy, a child must have at least three years of pre-primary education before starting formal school education.

Ricin poison terror plot: NIA takes over probe

AHMEDABAD, PTI

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs has handed over the probe into the alleged ricin poison terror plot to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), said a senior Gujarat ATS official on Saturday.

The Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) had arrested Dr Ahmed Mohiyuddin Saiyed, Azad Suleman Sheikh, and Mohammad Suhail Mohammad Saleem on November 9 last year for their alleged role in a plan to carry out a major terrorist attack with weapons and chemicals.

The agency had booked the three under the stringent UAPA, or Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, besides invoking the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Arms Act.

"The MHA has ordered to hand over the UAPA case concerning the ricin chemical plot to the NIA," Superintendent of Police (ATS) K Siddharth told PTI.

Ricin is a highly poisonous substance that can be made from the waste material left over from processing castor beans.

Gujarat ATS, which was probing the case, arrested Dr Saiyed, originally from Hyderabad, near Adalaj in Gandhinagar on November 7 with two Glock pistols, a Beretta pistol, 30 live cartridges and four litres of castor oil, officials had earlier said.

The other accused, Sheikh and Saleem were arrested in Banaskantha district for allegedly supplying weapons to Dr Saiyed.

The officials had then confirmed that Saiyed's handler, Abu Khadija, was from Afghanistan and associated with the ISKP (Islamic State Khorasan Province), and he had also been in contact with several individuals from Pakistan.

Tirupati: Drunk man scales temple tower

HYDERABAD, DHNS: A man sparked chaos at Tirupati's iconic Sri Govindarajaswamy Temple on Friday evening by evading security, scaling the temple wall, and climbing the Rajagopuram just inside the main entrance.

He tampered with the kalasams-traditional metal finials- atop the tower. He was identified as Kuttadi Tirupati 45, a daily-wage labourer, from Nizamabad district.

Tirupati East police and fire services took three hours to safely bring him down after he demanded a quarter bottle of liquor for descending.

YSRCP leaders condemned the incident as a blatant sacrilege, citing it as proof of the government's failure to safeguard temples, faith, and devotees.

Former TTD Chairman Bhuma Karunakar Reddy said the breach exposed a total collapse of security and governance at the historic site.

Amid strained B'desh ties, KKR drops Mustafizur

BCCI says IPL franchise can pick a replacement

BENGALURU, DHNS

As diplomatic tensions between India and Bangladesh continue to rise, cricket has once again found itself caught in the crossfire. Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman was released by IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders following a directive from the Board of Control for Cricket in India on Saturday.

Bangladesh has been going through political unrest, which has also fuelled strong anti-India sentiment. Against this backdrop, the BCCI on Saturday asked KKR to let go of the left-arm seamer ahead of the upcoming IPL season.

"The BCCI has asked Kolkata Knight Riders to release Mustafizur Rahman. The franchise can seek a replacement if required, and the BCCI will allow it upon request," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia was quoted as saying by PTI.

Saikia, a former Advocate General of Assam, said the decision was taken in view of "recent developments all across", without going into the details.

KKR had signed the left-arm pacer at last month's IPL auction after a fierce bidding war with Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals. Although Mustafizur had set his base price at Rs 2 crore, the Shah Rukh Khan-owned franchise shelled out Rs 9.20 crore to secure his services.

The franchise later confirmed the development in a statement posted on X.

"Kolkata Knight Riders confirms that BCCI/IPL, as the regulator of the IPL, has instructed the franchise to release Mustafizur Rahman from the squad ahead of the upcoming season. The release has been carried out following due process and consultations, as per the instructions of the Board of Control for Cricket in India," the statement read.

With Mustafizur's exit, there will now be no Bangladeshi representation in the IPL. The league has already maintained a blanket ban on Pakistani cricketers since 2009, following the Mumbai terror attacks.

The move could have wider implications for bilateral cricket between the two neighbours. India's scheduled white-ball tour of Bangladesh in September, which had already been postponed once due to security concerns, is now under a cloud. Just a day earlier, the Bangladesh Cricket Board had announced the itinerary for a six-match series.

India have not played bilateral cricket against Pakistan since 2012, and the two nations do not tour each other even for ICC events, with their matches held at neutral venues instead.

Bangladesh's participation in the T20 World Cup, which India will co-host with Sri Lanka in February, is not expected to be affected at this stage.

Several politicians from the ruling BJP had urged the BCCI to exclude Mustafizur from the IPL. Shah Rukh Khan was also criticised for KKR's decision to buy the Bangladeshi cricketer amid the prevailing situation.

SPORTS TAKES A HIT

- KKR had signed Mustafizur at last month's IPL by shelling out Rs 9.20 crore
- With Mustafizur's exit, there will now be no Bangladeshi in the IPL
- India's white-ball tour of Bangladesh in September is now under a cloud
- Several politicians from the ruling BJP had publicly urged the BCCI to exclude Mustafizur

Hindu trader succumbs to injuries

A Hindu businessman, who was attacked, hacked and set on fire three days ago, died on Saturday in Bangladesh, reports and a minority faith group leader said. Page 9

Problematic Internet use can rewire brain: Study

People with PIU show substance addiction-like traits

DH SPECIAL

KUSHAGRA BHARDWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

As social media posts get more addictive and smartphones become an extension of our hand, a recent study from Bengaluru-based Nimhans has revealed that individuals with problematic Iinternet use struggle with cognitive functions and emotional processing.

The research, conducted by Dr Rajesh Kumar, Assistant Professor, Department of Clinical Psychology, Nimhans, and his team, compared 26 individuals seeking treatment for problematic Internet use (PIU) with 26 individuals with no such symptoms. Participants were aged 18-25 years, with both groups matched for age, education and gender.

The study identified PIU through several characteristics beyond just the time spent online, including loss of control over usage, inability to reduce use despite wanting to, and using the internet primarily to escape negative feelings. It highlighted how similar traits are observed in substance and addictive abuse disorders.

As per the study, these individuals demonstrated impairments across multiple brain functions associated with the prefrontal cortex.

Kumar explained that human behaviour is largely governed by two interacting brain systems. The limbic cortex drives the impulsive system, which seeks immediate pleasure and reward, while the prefrontal cortex controls the executive system, as it is responsible for planning, decision-making, and self-control.

"The prefrontal cortex continues to develop around age 23-25 years, while heightened sensation-seeking has been attributed to the earlier maturation of limbic and reward-related regions relative to the prefrontal cortex," Kumar, who is also a consultant at the SHUT clinic and the Centre for Addiction Medicine (CAM) unit at Nimhans, told *DH*.

The study found that PIU appears to suppress prefrontal cortex functions while increasing activity in pleasure-seeking brain regions. This creates an imbalance where immediate gratification overrides long-term thinking. The research used neuropsychological tests to assess brain function. Results showed that individuals with PIU had difficulties with sustained attention, taking longer to complete vigilance tasks. They showed reduced cognitive flexibility, struggling to switch between different mental tasks.

▸ Internet, Page 8

Managing internet

- Keep phones away during meals and family time
- Create no-notification times
- Min two hours per day without screens
- One day a week offline

Cong announces 45-day MGNREGA protests from Jan 10

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Accusing the Modi government of taking India to 'Vinash Bharat' instead of 'Viksit Bharat', the Congress on Saturday announced a 45-day 'MGNREGA Bachao Sangram' from January 10 demanding the restoration of UPA-era rural job guarantee law and said it will explore "all options", including its non-implementation in Opposition-ruled states.

Mallikarjun Kharge

The main Opposition party said it will reach out to other Opposition parties and the governments led by them to take the protest against the government repealing the "demand-driven, rights-based" MGNREGA for VB-G RAM G Act, which changes the scheme into "supply-driven" besides mandating states to bear 40% of the expenses.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the party is "clearly and unequivocally" demanding withdrawal VB GRAM G Act, restore MGNREGA and restore the right to work and panchayats' authority. "Attacking MGNREGA is attacking crores of workers and their Constitutional rights. We will resist, peacefully and firmly, from every Panchayat to Parliament," he said on 'X'.

Addressing a press conference to announce the January 10-February 25 agitation, General Secretary (Organisation) K C Venugopal said the government's "design is to kill" MGNREGA and a "Constitutional promise is being converted into a government programme" with jobs no longer remaining a right.

▸ MGNREGA, Page 8

14 Maoists killed in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh

SUKMA/BIJAPUR, PTI

In the first Naxalite encounter of 2026, at least 14 Maoists, including wanted ultras Vetti Mangdu and Madvi Hunga, were killed in separate encounters in Chhattisgarh's Sukma and Bijapur districts in the Bastar region on Saturday, officials said.

While 12 Naxalites, including Mangdu and Madkam, and five women, were neutralised by security forces in Sukma, the bodies of two Maoist cadres were found in the forests of Gaganpalli village in Basaguda, Bijapur.

State police unit, District Reserve Guard (DRG) had launched the anti-naxal operations based on inputs about the presence of Maoist cadres, a senior police official said.

Hailing the security personnel, Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai said that due to the precise strategy, sustained pressure, and strong ground presence of the security forces, the Maoist network has been rapidly weakening.

The operation in the southern region of Sukma was launched on Friday night by the DRG.

An exchange of fire broke out around 8 am in the forest of the Kistaram area, said Sukma superintendent of police Kiran Chavan.

"The bodies of 12 cadres, including five women, and automatic weapons were recovered from the encounter site," he said.

Two among them were identified as Vetti Mangdu and Madvi Hitesh alias Hunga.

IG (Bastar Range) Sundarraj Pattilingam (front left) at a press conference in Chhattisgarh on Saturday. PTI

Top Maoist leader surrenders

In a major setback to CPI (Maoist), its last remaining fortress collapsed after PLGA Battalion Commander Badse Sukka, alias Deva, surrendered with a Colt rifle and a cache of arms. Nine team members also surrendered before DGP B Shivadhar Reddy. Operating across Sukma, Dantewada and Bijapur in Chhattisgarh, this battalion once commanded by Maoist leader Madvi Hidma, remained renowned for its firepower and discipline. Page 10

Ballari clash: Govt plans stricter gun laws, says DKS

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government is considering stricter gun laws after a Congress worker died when a private individual opened fire during a political clash in Ballari, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar said on Saturday.

"We have lost a party worker. The ongoing investigation will reveal who is at fault. All private guns have been seized," Shivakumar, who is also Karnataka Congress president, said.

"We are thinking about what should be done going forward. We have seen misuse. This is the second incident involving a privately-held firearm. We will have a discussion with the home minister on stricter norms. We will list everything out. It will require a discussion with the Union government, too," Shivakumar said.

Karnataka has an estimated 94,000 gun licences. People keep licensed firearms for protection of their crops, self-defence and sports.

▸ DKS, Page 4B

'Won't allow Republic of Ballari again'

DCM D K Shivakumar hit out at BJP MLA G Janardhan Reddy, vowing that Congress won't allow the 'Republic of Ballari' to be established again. The 'Republic of Ballari' is how then Lokayukta Justice Santosh Hegde described Reddy's operations during his mining operations.

Human-animal conflict: Forest dept turns to technology

BENGALURU, DHNS

The rise in human-animal conflict incidents in 11 forest divisions has prompted the Karnataka Forest Department to lean further on technical solutions, with the minister inaugurating an Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) to manage the situation.

The ICCC is planned to be the hub connecting Divisional Command and Control Centre (DCCC) set up in MM Hills, Madikeri, Hassan, Chikkamagaluru, Mangaluru and Bannerghatta National Park divisions, and in the five tiger reserves: Nagarahole, Bandipur, Bhadra, BRT and Kali.

While DCCCs look into complaints of conflict at the divisional-level and look into deploying a quick reaction force, ICCC looks into monitoring and evaluation of the work done. It provides alerts and views developments across divisions from a single dashboard to come up with comprehensive mitigation measures.

"ICCC helps reduce response time, which will go a long way in reaching out to people. At the same time, it uses technology for preventive actions," Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre said, after inaugurating the centre at Aranya Bhavan in Malleswaram.

The command centre will keep an eye on the work done at the ground level, starting with monitoring of patrolling through GPS-based application (e-Gastu), keeping a watch on sensitive areas that are vulnerable to conflict as well monitoring problem elephants which are fitted with radio collars.

Khandre, who held a meeting with officials, said the government was ready to provide support for acquiring technology. "Let me know how many thermal cameras, AI-enabled cameras and thermal drones are required. The government's intention is to end man-animal conflict. Yes, accidents happen, but we in Karnataka should set a good standard to prevent them," he said.

6 hurt in mob attack on cops in Sandeshkhali; 9 held

KOLKATA, PTI: Six policemen were injured and a police vehicle vandalised in a mob attack during an attempt to arrest a TMC worker in Sandeshkhali, once again pushing the coastal block into political focus ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections.

The incident occurred on Friday night when a team from Nazat police station went to Boyermari village in Sandeshkhali to arrest local TMC activist Musa Mollah in connection with alleged illegal occupation of land and water bodies for pisciculture, police said.

As officers tried to pick up Mollah and place him inside the police vehicle, a group of villagers, described by police as his supporters, allegedly blocked the car, threw stones and vandalised it.

Six policemen, including an officer, were injured.

HAMPI'S TWIN

Mulbagal's 800-yr-old temple a picture of neglect

ASHWIN BM
BENGALURU, DHNS

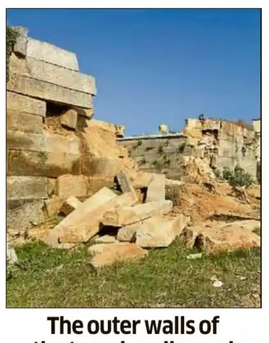
DH SPECIAL

While the grandeur of Hampi's Virupaksha Temple remains a global magnet, its architectural twin in Mulbagal is not much noticed. The 800-year-old Virupaksha Swamy Temple at Virupaksha fort, is ironically situated near the ASI protected Ramalingeshawara group of temples, Avani. This State Protected Monument has become state neglected, with its outer fortifications collapsing and its precincts besieged by invasive vegetation.

Built by the legendary Vijayanagara general Lakkana Dandesha under the reign of Devaraya II, the temple was designed to mirror the Hampi masterpiece. However, the current reality at the site is a far cry from its royal past. Heavy rains triggered the collapse of the outer wall about three years ago, which had already been weakened by unchecked root growth and structural seepage.

The complex also features an inscription from 1481 CE and a mantapa with intricate carvings that are now being choked by weeds.

▸ Temple, Page 4B



The outer walls of the temple collapsed following heavy rains.

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APP ANXIETY As gig workers strike, new law stirs more questions than answers

Who's paying the price for your 10-minute delivery?

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Discourse around 10-minute delivery and the gig economy has been all the rage both on and off the internet recently. While the gig economy currently presents some vital employment opportunities in India, the question remains: Do we really need anything delivered in 10 minutes—except, perhaps, in medical emergencies?

Amidst growing resistance from the gig and platform worker community, in the background of calls for two nationwide strikes calling for a ban on '10 minute delivery', questions are being raised about the "unethical practices" within the gig economy.

Despite both the union and state government stepping in to organise the gig and platform workers sector, it continues to remain unorganised, leaving workers vulnerable to exploitation.

The Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Act, 2025 has come into force with effect from 30 May 2025. Subsequently, the Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Rules, 2025, have been notified and made accessible to the public and came into effect from 19 November 2025.

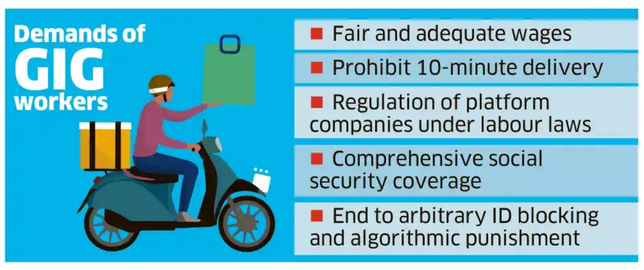
A senior official from the Labour Department informed *DH* that details regarding the formulation of the Welfare Board and the percentage of welfare fee to be charged to aggregators will be presented to the state government on January 5, post which it will soon be notified, coming into effect.

Pointing to some of the gaps within the law, Advocate KM Sai Apabharana said, "The law requires that 1% to 5% of the amount payable to a gig worker per transaction be deposited by the platform/aggregator into a welfare fund. This effectively reduces the amount the gig worker receives for each transaction completed. Although the worker would gain access to potential welfare benefits under various schemes, it remains unclear whether each worker would prefer such benefits over receiving the full payment directly. This is particularly significant given that the precise nature of, and benefits available under, all of the welfare schemes might not be fully known to the workers."

To ensure a more well-rounded welfare scheme, Inayath Ali, president of Karnataka App-based Workers Union and national vice president of the Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers Union, urged aggregator platforms to release comprehensive daily data. "The founder of Zomato proudly shared that his companies made 75 lakh deliveries on New Year's Eve despite the strike. But when either our union or even the state government has asked them for daily data, they haven't done it," he said.

In the interim, the Union Government recently published new draft rules under the Social Security Code 2020, proposing a 90-day work threshold as the mandatory eligibility criteria for gig and platform workers to access social security. If a worker uses multiple platforms, the mandatory threshold increases to 120 days.

Even as governments attempt to bring order to the gig economy, the sector remains fragmented and unregulated, keeping workers vulnerable to systemic exploitation. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN



Why gig work?

Over the past two days, Zomato founder Deepinder Goyal has made multiple public statements claiming that 10-minute delivery does not put pressure on gig workers, sharing its pros.

Defending the gig economy, he said, "If a system were fundamentally unfair, it would not consistently attract and retain so many people who choose to work within it. Please don't get swept up by narratives pushed by vested interests." His take on the workings of the gig economy has drawn major backlash across the country.

In one of his posts on X, Goyal also urged people to ask gig workers why they choose the job. "If you've ever wanted to know why millions of Indians voluntarily take up platform work and sometimes even prefer it to regular jobs, JUST ASK any rider partner when you get your next food or grocery order," he wrote.

DH posed the same question to about 20 gig workers in Bengaluru, spanning across platforms such as Swiggy, Blinkit, Zepto, Zomato, UrbanCompany, and Porter, and the responses unanimously pointed to "lack of better jobs".

A majority of the workers associated the job with words such as 'stress', 'shame', 'pressure', and 'penalty'. They also shared that their average daily pay for seven to 12 hours of work is between Rs 600 to Rs 1,300. This is before deductions such as cancellation penalty and fuel expense.

Pappu Kumar, who has been working in the field for the past eight months, shared instances where his family has begged him to find a different job. "They are worried about me since I'm on the road all day. I tell them I drive safely, but I know how I drive when I'm in a rush to deliver an order. These apps promise 5-minute delivery, but fail to take into consideration the state of the city's roads, lack of parking and other hurdles we face along the way.

"No one wants to spend 10 hours driving in the Bengaluru traffic, only to earn less than Rs 1,000 at the end of the day. I tried for three years to get a clerical job, but when COVID hit, I had no other option but to resort to gig work. For one year, I earned decently as both Zomato and Swiggy offer incentives to new drivers. But soon enough, all incentives stopped. Now I'm not able to find any other job due to a lack of experience in other fields," shared a 29-year-old gig worker on the accounts of anonymity.

Sharath, another delivery agent, expressed his concern for the lack of dignity that Indians have towards gig workers.

"We as a community don't have respect for gig work. Every day, at least one or two customers will make us feel like untouchables — by refusing to take the order from our hands and asking us to leave it on the floor, or even refusing to provide water. My own family has respect for my job, but I have to stick with it because I have loans on my head," he said.

Calling out Goyal for his comments, Rakshita Swamy, member of Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan and SAFAR, emphasised how 'exploitative labour' does not equal 'providing opportunities'.

"People are having to choose this work due to the state of our economy — look at the levels of unemployment and debt in the country. This is not the fault of the aggregators; it is a structural fault in our economy and the policies of our countries. And with the repeal of MNREGA, things are only going to get worse. But this does not mean aggregators use this as an opportunity to exploit labour. The space they are offering for gig workers must be within the letter of the law," she said.

Swiggy, Zomato and Zepto declined to comment on the Karnataka Platform Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Act, 2025, and its implementation.

QR code display cards mandatory in city autos

Passengers can access driver's full profile with a quick scan

DH SPECIAL

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

In a move to improve transparency and safety among autorickshaw drivers, the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) is set to launch a QR code-enabled display card in the second week of January.

These QR codes will be linked to the Astram App and will be installed in all autos on a mandatory basis, said Karthik Reddy, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic).

"The QR code will have similar details to what the current display cards have. While there is room to misuse the display cards, that won't be possible with the QR codes, as it will all be verified information directly linked to our database. This eliminates the issue of drivers faking the display cards," Reddy told *DH*.

The display cards, which were made mandatory in 2005, include details such as the driver's photograph, address, and contact information, along with the driver's licence and vehicle registration number. However, in the past few years, the number of autos displaying these cards has drastically reduced.

In 2025, only 68,000 display cards were renewed. These are issued by the office of the respective Assistant Commissioner of Police.

Once the QR-enabled display cards are launched, efforts will be made to strictly enforce their usage, said Reddy.

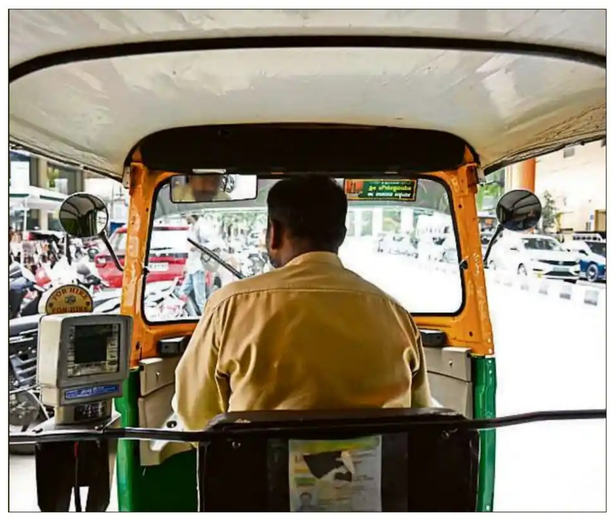
"In case there is an untoward incident, the passengers can get the exact details about the driver through the QR code. It will also display the contact details they can reach out to in case help is needed," he said.

A similar initiative was also floated in 2023 and 2014, but failed to kick off. This time around, with the support of the auto driver unions, there will be a strong push to successfully materialise the initiative, M A Saleem, DGP and IGP of Karnataka, told *DH*.

"When I had initiated it in 2023, I couldn't follow through as I was transferred soon after. I believe this is an important change which needs to happen. Safety is our top priority, and it will be of major help in that matter. It will help in weeding out unauthorised autos and unlicensed drivers," he said.

C Sampath, General Secretary of Adarsha Auto Union, urged BTP to provide the new display cards free of cost.

"A major reason why auto drivers no longer have these display cards is that, every time we go to get them, the police officers ask for a fee, which is different every time. They demand whatever they wish, from Rs 100 to Rs 500, which is unfair. The new display cards are a great initiative which can help curb unlicensed drivers, who are a growing menace in the city. We hope the traffic police can cooperate with us on this matter," he said.



Despite being mandatory since 2005, display cards are now rarely seen in city autos. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

Dhaba employee held for killing friend in drunken brawl

BENGALURU, DHNS: Madanayakanahalli police have arrested a 29-year-old dhaba employee for allegedly killing his friend following a drunken brawl and setting the body on fire to destroy evidence.

The accused has been identified as Chandan and a senior police officer said that the charred body of Ravi Honnammanavar (36) was found near a fertiliser godown in Madanayakanahalli on Friday morning. Ravi was running a street food business in KP Agrahara near Rajajinagar but recently joined for work in the Dhaba.

The incident came to light around 9.30 am, when the police received information about a burnt body lying near the godown. A diary recovered from the spot contained a mobile phone number, which helped the police trace the victim's relatives, who later identified the body.

Police said Ravi had moved to Bengaluru around two months ago and was staying in a rented house. Though married and father to a three-year-old son, he was living separately from his wife due to domestic issues. The police found that Ravi had suffered multiple injuries and was bludgeoned to death before the body was set ablaze.

A murder case was registered and investigations revealed Chandan's role in the crime.

Police said the accused and the victim had drank together during a New Year party and later quarreled over an issue. In a fit of rage, Chandan allegedly attacked Ravi and later set the body on fire to destroy evidence.

The accused was arrested on Saturday based on CCTV footage and has been remanded to judicial custody, police said.

SSK community to celebrate Sahasrarjuna Jayanthi

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Sri Rajarajeshwara Sahasrarjuna Maharaja Jayanthi Samiti, in association with the SSK Samaj, SSK Sangha, and SSK Co-operative Society Ltd., is set to celebrate the birth anniversary of Sri Sahasrarjuna Maharaja on January 4 at the Bunts' Sangha in Vijayanagar.

The day-long event, from 10 am to 8 pm, will be inaugurated by Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, while the flag hoisting will be performed by Vijayanagar MLA M Krishnappa.

Presided over by SSK Samaj Chairman Swamisa L Khoday, the celebration will feature an array of cultural programmes and entertainment, and will be attended by distinguished guests including Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao and Bengaluru Central MP P C Mohan.

Organisers have invited the community to gather in large numbers to commemorate their heritage and witness the festivities.

28-year-old man arrested for molesting doctor

BENGALURU, DHNS: Soladevanahalli police have arrested a 28-year-old man for allegedly molesting a woman doctor in front of her PG accommodation late at night. The arrest was made nearly two weeks after the incident, police said.

The accused has been identified as Rakesh L, a native of Tumakuru. He is unemployed and lives with his mother, who works as a domestic helper.

A senior police officer said the incident was reported on December 17 at AGB Layout in Chikkabanavara. The victim, who works at a private hospital, was returning to her PG after duty when the accused came on a motorcycle and stopped near the gate. He approached her on the pretext of asking for directions and allegedly touched her inappropriately as she attempted to open the gate. When the woman screamed for help, the accused fled the spot on his motorcycle. Neighbours rushed to assist her and informed the police.

Based on the victim's complaint, an FIR was registered at the Soladevanahalli police station. During the investigation, police traced the accused using CCTV footage from the area. Police said the accused had removed the number plate of his motorcycle while committing the offence and was roaming around the locality in an intoxicated state. Noticing that the woman was alone, he allegedly committed the crime.

Traffic curbs in place for Chithra Santhe today

BENGALURU, DHNS: With a large footfall expected to attend the 23rd edition of Chithra Santhe, the Bengaluru City Traffic Police (BTP) have issued a travel advisory. Vehicle movement will be prohibited on both sides of Kumara Krupa Road — from Windsor Manor Junction to Shivananda Circle — between 5 am and 10 pm on Sunday.

Traffic diversions

From Anandrao Circle: Vehicles heading toward Windsor Manor must proceed straight at Race View Junction onto Race Course Road, passing through Trilight Junction, Basaveshwara Circle, and Old High Grounds Junction to reach T Chowdaiah Road.

From T Chowdaiah Road: Commuters heading toward KK Road should continue straight from Windsor Junction, reach Old High Grounds Junction, turn right at LRDE, and proceed via Basaveshwara Junction.

DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

From P G Halli: Vehicles moving toward Shivananda Circle are advised to take the route via Old High Grounds Junction, LRDE, Basaveshwara Circle, and Race Course Road.

From Nehru Circle: To reach Trilight Junction, vehicles can take the Steel Bridge directly from Nehru Circle.

Where to park

Given the restricted access, the police have designated specific areas for four-wheeler parking:

Railway Parallel Road

Crescent Road: Western side (from Gururaja Kalyanamantapa to Hotel Janardhan)

Race Course Road: Eastern side (from Trilight Junction toward Mourya Circle)

"Due to the significant shortage of parking space and the expected crowds, we strongly urge the public to utilise public transport, including the Metro and BMTC feeder services," the BTP stated.

BMTC will be operating special feeder buses from Majestic, Shivajinagar, and Mantri Square Metro stations to Shivananda Circle for the convenience of visitors.

Musicians unite to honour SPB's legacy

BENGALURU, DHNS: Several well-known musicians are performing together on Sunday to pay tribute to the legendary singer S P Balasubrahmanyam.

Titled 'Evergreen SPB', the charity concert is scheduled at the Prestige Centre for Performing Arts and starts at 5 pm.

The five-hour concert will be led by SPB Charan, who carries forward his father's rich musical legacy, and will feature veena maestro Rajhesh Vaidhya, Grammy-nominated singer and flautist Varijashree Venugopal, and renowned drummer Arun Kumar and his band. Others in the lineup include Giridhar Udupa, Pramath Kiran, Ranjan, Varun Pradeep, and Bruthva Caleb.

Evergreen SPB is a charity concert dedicated to the "brave warriors" at Sri Shankara Cancer Hospital and Research Centre, says a press note.

PADDLE PLANS

Row, row, row your eco-friendly boats

BENGALURU, DHNS

Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) Commissioner Maheshwar Rao on Saturday directed officials to coordinate with the Tourism Department to develop lakes as public attractions while preserving their ecological balance.

"Diesel or fuel-based boats shall not be permitted in any lake. Only non-polluting alternatives shall be introduced, and the boating system shall be designed to ensure zero pollution and minimal disturbance to aquatic life," Rao said.

Boating activities in city lakes will follow a zero-pollution model, with minimal impact on aquatic life. DH FILE PHOTO

He also directed officers to examine the feasibility of introducing ducks in lakes, as ducks are natural aerators and contribute to improving water quality. The entire responsibility of duck rearing and maintenance shall be entrusted through tendering, to ensure accountability, he added.

Rao also instructed officials to ensure that all works undertaken by corporations and allied agencies strictly align with nature-based and eco-friendly principles, promoting long-term environmental sustainability and enhanced climate resilience.

Flood mitigation

Addressing the issue of frequent flooding, Rao directed that flood-prone locations be identified, and valley-wise, appropriate nature-based flood mitigation solutions be prepared.

"Immediate precautionary measures, including desilting of stormwater drains, removal of blockages, and restoration of natural drainage systems, shall be taken up on priority," he said.

The concerned departments were also instructed to prepare a short-term flood mitigation plan, detailing works that can be completed within the next four months, with a focus on critical and vulnerable locations to minimise flood impact during the monsoon.

Hosakerehalli flyover offers little relief, say commuters

DH SPECIAL

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Hosakerehalli flyover, near PES university that opened on November 12 2025 after its construction began in August 2020 with an initial deadline of 15 months, was meant to relieve the traffic congestion but has failed to deliver the anticipated relief. DH PHOTO BY PUSHKAR V

The Hosakerehalli flyover, near PES University, opened on November 12, 2025. Its construction began in August 2020 with an initial deadline of 15 months. The project was meant to ease traffic congestion but has failed to deliver the anticipated relief.

During peak hours, traffic clogs up the flyover heading towards Nayandahalli, commuters said. "The flyover has transferred the bottleneck from ground to flyover. There is no actual relief and a five year waiting period for nothing to change," said Ramakanth, a commuter.

The entrance to the flyover towards Nayandahalli has also been left unfinished, with a 4-inch layer of asphalt that commuters complain about. Raju K, an auto driver, said, "Are they incapable of neatly finishing the project? Vehicle suspensions get damaged due to this."

The road below the flyover towards Hosakerehalli is currently closed by the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewage Board (BWSSB) for laying new pipes. Because of this, buses and other heavy vehicles are being diverted onto the flyover, further slowing down the rest of the traffic.

Anitha M, a garments worker and resident of Veerabhadranagar, said, "The buses go on the flyover and the Veerabhadranagar bus stop is closed because of this. Only some drivers stop near the entrance of the flyover for us to get down, which is risky, if they do not stop there we next have to get down near PES and walk almost two kilometers."

The residents here have been put in an uncomfortable situation repeatedly by the authorities, she added.

The smooth flow of traffic towards Hosakerehalli lasts only till the Janata Bazar and Itmadu junction, where the traffic clogs for more than a kilometer — and gets even worse during peak hours, said shopowners at the Janata Bazar signal. "Including Hosakerehalli flyover there are two flyovers and one underpass before reaching Janata Bazar signal but still there is congestion here which proves that none of these are solutions. The government should focus on other means than building flyovers," said a shopowner, wishing to remain anonymous.

A senior traffic cop confirmed that traffic congestion at Janata Bazar is an everyday occurrence. The traffic from Gorguntepaly reaches Janata Bazar without any signal in between; hence, the overflow of traffic causes the jam, he added.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

'Walk to Heal' Walkathon: Flag-off by Sridhar Vembu, organised by Youth for Service, venue: KSGEA Cubbon Park; 7.30 am

Vishwakarma Public Awareness Conference: Commemoration of Amarashilpi Jakanachari: Inauguration: S Muniraju, S T Somashekar, Chairmanship: K P Nanjundi Vishwakarma, Organization: Akhila Vishwakarma Mahasabha: In front of Neelkantheswaraswamy Temple, Hegganahalli Cross; 11 am

Nari Shakti' National Conference – 2026: Presence: Vikhyathananda Swamiji, Renukananda Swamiji, Ramappa, Inauguration: B K Hariprasad, Guests: Ramalinga Reddy, Dinesh Gundurao, Madhu Bangarappa, Kota Srinivasa Poojary, Belur Gopalakrishna, Nagalakshmi Choudhary: Karnataka Arya Ediga Mahila Sangha: NIMHANS Convention Center, Hosur Road; 10 am

Inauguration ceremony of the centenary of Devanga Sangha: Guests: Nirmalanandanath Swamiji, CM Siddaramaiah, D K Shivakumar, G Parameshwara, Satish Jarkiholi, Dinesh Gundurao, Rizwan Arshad, Umashree, G Ramesh, Closing ceremony: Guests: H D Kumaraswamy, Pralhad Joshi, B Y Vijayendra, P C Mohan: Devanga Sangha: Gayatri Vihar Gate No.-4, Palace Grounds; 10 am

Birth anniversary of Sri Sahasrarjuna Maharaja: Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, MLA M Krishnappa, Swamisa L Khoday to be present, Bunts' Sangha in Vijayanagar; 10 am

CULTURAL

'Kuvempu Nenapu' Poet-Poetry-Song Dance Festival: Inauguration: S Ramalingeshwar, presided over: D B Mallikarjunaswamy Mahamane: Rangotri: Kumar Angal, Elekodigehalli, Magadi Road; 5.30 pm

'Baithak' Hindustani Music Concert: Vocals: Sushma Kashyap, Tabla: Shashibhushan Gurjar, Harmonium: Sameer Hawaldar: Sri Rama Kala Vedike: Shadja Kala Kendra, Mount layout Malleswaram; 5.30 pm

Sri Purandara Dasara, Thyagaraja's aaradhane, anniversary: Music concert, Mridangam soloist: Trichur C Narendran, Mridangam: Pranav Tirumala, B S Samarth: Sripurandara Thyagaraja Temple, Sangeet Seva Mandali, venue: Sribhavani Shankara Temple, Vasantapura; 9.30 am

Hejje Gejje Madhura Nada Sambhrama: Guests: Y K Sandhya Sharma, Jagadish Jala: Natyakusumanjali Cultural Center, venue: Ravindra Kalakshetra, JC Road; 9.30 am

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST
Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	28.0°C
Minimum	18.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	78%
Sunset (Jan 4)	6:05 pm
Sunrise (Jan 5)	6:42 am
Moonrise	6:30 pm
Moonset	6:30 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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SCAN TO KNOW MORE

Housing: Ashoka asks officials to give priority to applicants from state

BENGALURU, DHNS: Leader of Opposition R Ashoka on Saturday visited the Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation Limited and urged the officials to give houses to close to 65,000 applicants on priority.

Alleging that the residents evicted from Kogilu were not from Karnataka, he said that the applicants from Karnataka should be given priority.

Ashoka

"About 7,000 houses have been built under various schemes in the corporation. Another 10,000 houses are under construction. An 80-year-old woman has paid the full amount, but she has not yet been given a house. For the past four months, she has been made to run around, and that house still lacks drinking water and an electricity connection," he charged.

"Similarly, thousands of Kannadigas have applied and are waiting for houses. But the Congress government is giving houses to Bangla residents at Kogilu Cross," he alleged.

He added that the BJP will protest against the government's decision on January 5. He also noted that close to 13,000 people had lost their homes due to floods and they have not been given houses.

"MLAs from North Karnataka are coming here and asking for houses on behalf of flood victims. If officials violate rules, they themselves will become scapegoats. Therefore, genealogy should be made mandatory when giving houses," he said.

NGEF land to bloom into 65-acre tree park, phase I opens in Mar

To house incubation centre for startups, digital museum

BENGALURU, DHNS:

The defunct New Government Electrical Factory (NGEF) campus at Baiyappanahalli here is all set for a green makeover.

Of the 105-acre factory land, 65 acres will be transformed into a sprawling tree park, with the first phase scheduled to open for the public in March, Large and Medium Industries Minister M B Patil announced on Saturday.

The minister, who inspected the ongoing works at the site along with senior officials, said the project was being developed in four stages (phase 1, 1A, 1B, and 2) at a total cost of Rs 37.75 crore. "The first phase is nearing completion and will be inaugurated in March. Work on Phase 1A will be finished in the next six months," he said.

Patil said the campus already housed 8,500 trees of various species. "We have already tagged these trees with their scientific names. Not a single tree will be felled for this project. However, we are scientifically evaluating the eucalyptus trees on the premises to decide on the next course of action," he added. The government has already released Rs 11.5 crore for initial works.

The redevelopment will repurpose the existing industrial infrastructure rather than demolishing it. Structural audits by the Indian Institute of Science (IISC) have confirmed that the administrative buildings and industrial sheds remain robust. Patil detailed plans to convert two electric motor sheds into convention centres with a combined seating capacity of 15,000. These venues will host seminars, conferences and annual events.

Additionally, an incubation centre for startups named 'Innoverse' will be established by the Karnataka Innovation and Technology Society (KITS) here.

The IT-BT department is slated to develop a 'digital museum' to trace Karnataka's evolution as a global tech hub, at an investment of Rs 100 crore.

The park is designed to rival the city's iconic lung spaces like Cubbon Park and Lalbagh.

The minister said a small portion of land required for the entrance was currently with BMRCL.

"We are in talks with BMRCL officials to secure the land for the entry plaza. Our goal is to make this a world-class destination for people of east Bengaluru," he said.

Industries Minister M B Patil, along with senior officials, inspects works to develop a tree park on the premises of the defunct NGEF, in Bengaluru on Saturday. PHOTO BY SPL ARRANGEMENT

In the works

Recreational facilities: Elevated walkway, cycling tracks, waterfront with fountains, sculpture park, dedicated pet zone.

Cultural hub: A world-class museum dedicated to the history of NGEF and an open-air amphitheatre for cultural activities.

Multi-level parking: On a 4.5-acre plot outside the compound to accommodate 5,000 to 7,000 vehicles.

Elected reps should behave responsibly, says Khader

MANGALURU, DHNS: Legislative Assembly Speaker U T Khader said elected representatives, including MLAs, should conduct themselves responsibly in public.

He was speaking to reporters here. The Speaker said, "What happened in Ballari is not right. Clashes carried out in a cinematic style, and hate politics, should not happen in society. Because of such behaviour, all politicians are viewed in a bad light. Inside and outside the Assembly, MLAs should speak in a dignified manner rather than engaging in issuing threats against each other. What message are they giving to society?"

Referring to Ballari Congress MLA Nara Bharath Reddy and BJP MLA G Janardhan Reddy, Khader said he would speak to those involved.

Responding to a query on the Kogilu demolition, Khader said the state government would look into the matter and that, as Speaker, he could not comment further.

When asked about cockfighting incidents triggering controversy in the district, Khader said, "The organisers claim that no betting was involved, stating it was part of a ritual and tradition, while the police maintain that betting and gambling were involved in cockfighting. We will discuss the issue with the Law Minister and the officials concerned. There is a need for suitable rules or legislation by the government."

On the BJP opposing the Hate Speech Bill passed in the Legislative Assembly and Council, Khader said, "The Bill aims to curb and prevent the dissemination, publication, or promotion of hate speech and related crimes that cause disharmony and hatred in society. It is not targeted at anyone."

Two arrested for harassing women, assaulting cop on New Year's Eve

BENGALURU, DHNS

Vidhana Soudha police have arrested two employees of a private company for allegedly harassing women waiting for a cab and assaulting a police constable during New Year celebrations.

The arrested have been identified as Ansh Mehta and Parv Rathi, both aged about 22. They had recently moved to Bengaluru from Chennai and were working for a private firm.

The incident was reported around 1.40 am on January 1. The accused, who were under the influence of alcohol, were allegedly misbehaving with four women in front of a pub on Queens Road.

On-duty police constable Ravi noticed the incident and intervened. The accused allegedly abused and pushed him, tearing his jacket in the process. Ravi then alerted beat police, who rushed to the spot and detained the duo.

An FIR was registered at the Vidhana Soudha police station, and both men were remanded to judicial custody after interrogation.

The accused told police they had completed their graduation at a private college in Bengaluru, moved to Chennai for work, and had recently returned to the city. They had rented a house in Bommanahalli and had come to MG Road to celebrate the New Year.

SPOILS OF TOIL

Farmers unload harvested ragi from a bullock cart at a farm in Chikkamagaluru. PTI PHOTO

Ballari clash: Govt plans stricter gun laws, says DKS

DKS, From Page 3

The situation in Ballari turned violent late Thursday evening after a follower of Bellary City Congress MLA Nara Bharath Reddy tried to put up a banner in front of BJP lawmaker G Janardhana Reddy's house in Havambhavi to announce the installation of a Valmiki idol.

Shivakumar backed Bharath. "For the first time, our government is installing a Valmiki statue in Ballari and our MLA has taken the responsibility of this," he said. "The entire party stands with my MLA. He tried to keep peace."

Shivakumar also defended the suspension of Ballari superintendent of police Pavan Nejjur. "I spoke to the SP within a few minutes of getting to know about the situation. I know in what stage the SP was when he spoke to me," he said.

Shivakumar said he also spoke to senior BJP leader B Sriramulu. "Party politics isn't important. Maintenance of peace is important," Shivakumar said.

Medical board to assess age of juveniles at district level

BENGALURU, DHNS: As per the orders of the High Court of Karnataka, the Health and Family Welfare Department has directed for establishment of a medical board at the district level for the assessment of juveniles' age.

The medical board will consist of a physiologist, a dental expert, a radiologist and a forensic expert. However, as per the existing administrative structure of the Health Department, the post of physiologist does not function as a designated member of the medical board at the district level, and a physiologist from the nearest government medical college will be co-opted as a member of the medical board for the concerned case.

The district surgeon will be responsible for the timely coordination of the medical board meetings, ensuring the conduct of medical examination without delay, proper documentation of proceedings and submission of the medical board report to the reporting authority within the prescribed time.

No medical practitioner who is not a member of the medical board will conduct age-determination examinations, and the cases will not be referred to any individual medical practitioner.

Mulbagal's 800-yr-old temple a picture of neglect

Temple, From Page 3

The plight of the temple has not gone unnoticed by locals. In a rare show of communal responsibility, villagers pooled together Rs 1 lakh to initiate emergency repairs. However, their efforts were stalled by bureaucratic hurdles. "We wanted to save our heritage and use it for community programmes and yearly festivals but were stopped due to lack of official permission," a resident lamented.

The site is currently a haven for anti-social elements. Due to the lack of proper fencing, lighting and a dedicated security presence, locals report frequent instances of gambling and drinking within the sacred premises. And they alleged that to promote tourism and heritage has become last priority of the authorities.

When contacted, Kolar deputy commissioner confirmed to *DH* that he had visited the site but claimed no formal proposal for restoration had reached his desk. "The primary issue is the absence of a dedicated archaeology officer at the district level to coordinate these efforts," the DC told *DH*, adding that any proposal received would be forwarded to the State Archaeology Department.

The temple is architecturally and spiritually unique. It is one of the few shrines, alongside Gokarna, to house two Shivalingas the Atri Linga and the Atma-Linga. The temple priest say that the Atma-Linga changes colour thrice daily: blood-red at dawn, pristine white at noon, and honey-gold by evening. "It is the only temple besides Bengaluru's famous Gavi Gangadhareshwara Temple where sunlight falls directly on the deity; however, while it happens on Sankranti in the city, here it occurs on Shivarathri."

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

e-Auction for Contract

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-auction for 09.01.2026 Contract for Manning, Maintenance and Management of Parking Facilities Integrated with Multi Level Car Parking (MLCP) and other commercial activities located at Platform No. 1 Side, Yesvantpur Railway Station, Bengaluru Division,

PRE-BID MEETING :

Pre-Bid Meeting for Parking Contract integrated with MLCP at PF No.1 side at Yesvantapur Railway Station

Date and Time of Pre-Bid Meeting:

Monday. 05th January 2026, 05:20 4:00 to 6:00 PM

All Prospective bidders are requested to attend the Pre-Bid meeting on 05.01.2026 at 16.00 hours towards newly introduced multi- level car parking (MLCP) integrated with other commercial activities located at PF No, 1 side, Yesvantapur Railway Station

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Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Bengaluru

PUB/787/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26

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CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

Open GEM Tender

No. COS/CRJ/PUB/e-Tender/19/0162, Date: 25/12/2026. The following e-Tenders can be accessed under the link **www.gem.gov.in.** Offers for such e-Tender can be submitted only electronically by accessing the above mentioned website → **login.** Vendors may also contact the following officials to obtain clarification regarding particular tender or related information if any, Dy. CMM/M-II/CLW/Chittaranjan, Mobile no. 9163340726. **Office Address: Office of The PCMM /CLW/ Chittaranjan. Sl. No.: [1]. Tender No./GEM BID No.: GEM/2025/B/ 6974798. Brief Description of Item:** Aerial Bunched Cables as per IS 14255 (Q3).[XLPE insulated 1100V grade Aerial Bunch Cable of size 3C x 95 + 1C x 70 + 1C x 16 sq. mm., conforming to IS:7098(Pt.2)]**(As per Gem Bid No. GEM/2025/B/6974798 dt. 25-12-2025). Quantity:114000 meter. Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees):** ₹1482000.00. **Tender Closing Date & Time (IST): 19-01-2026 at 10:30.**

PR1/273 PCMM/CLW/Chittaranjan

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SOUTHERN RAILWAY

SIGNAL & TELECOMMUNICATION WORKSHOP, PODANUR
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For and on behalf of the president of India, The Chief Workshop Manager, Signal and Telecommunication Workshop, Podanur, Coimbatore-641023, invites E-Tender for the following works as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in the portal **www.ireps.gov.in** Tenderers / Contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal **www.ireps.gov.in** and only online tenders will be accepted. The Bid Security deposit should be made through online payment gateway or through available modes as mentioned in Tender document.

TENDER NOTICE No.SGW-STTC-AV-605152-25 Dated : 31.12.2025.

1	**Name of work**	Provision, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Audio & Video Systems including Networking Arrangements at ZSTTC / PTJ. Southern Railway.
2	**Approximate cost of the work**	**₹80,71,958.14/- Including GST @ 18%**
3	**Earnest money to be deposited**	**₹1,61,400/-**
4	**Completion period of work**	**180 Days**
5	**Date and time of closing of tender.**	**15.00 Hrs of 23.01.2026**
6	**Website particulars**	**www.ireps.gov.in**

For further details, visit office of the Chief Workshop Manager, Signal and Telecommunication workshop, Podanur, Coimbatore - 641023.

Dy.CSTE/S&T/PTJ
For Chief Workshop Manager S&T Workshop, Podanur.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

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Section	Chainage in KM		Probable date of Energization
Channasandra Yard	1/800	4/870	27.01.2026

Place : Bengaluru
Date : 27.12.2025

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer, Traction Distribution/ Construction, Bengaluru Cantonment

PUB/788/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26

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A) From experienced contractors for carrying out Civil works in Kasavanahalli Hospital Project of KRJS.

B) From various companies / suppliers for supply of Uniforms, Notebooks, Printing and stationary items for KRJS Group of Institutions.

C) From experienced agencies for proving Security guards to KRJS Institutions.

D) From various companies for supply of Library books and equipment's to Vemana institute of Physiotherapy.

Sealed quotations are to be submit within 7 days of this publication.

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Sd/- President **Sd/- General Secretary**

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EoI)

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EoI)FOROUTSOURCING OF ROC SPORTS ARENA, HUBBALLION RENT BASIS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR

1. INVITATION

The Railway Officer's Club, Hubballi invites Expression of Interest (EoI) from eligible, experienced and reputed agencies/firms/operators for outsourcing, operation and maintenance of ROC Sports Arena, Hubballi, on rent basis for a period of one (1) year, subject to terms and conditions.

2. SUBMISSION OF EoI : Requisite details are made available in **Annexure-I** and is available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ckC5oY3KH-vcaUBKSk-3-mG1dZl5x Sof/view?usp=drive_link Interested agencies shall submit their Expression of Interest along with all documents listed in **Annexure–II** (available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ckC5oY3KH-vcaUBKSk-3-mG1dZl5x Sof/view?usp=drive_link), duly signed, sealed and superscribed as:

"EoI for Outsourcing of ROC Sports Arena, Hubballi" Last Date & Time for Submission: 12-01-2026

Address for Submission: DRM(Works) Branch, Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Near SBI Main Branch, Keshwapur, Hubballi - 580023 Contact Details: 9731668200

PUB/796/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26

Senior Divisional Engineer / Co-Ordination / Hubballi

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Sl.No	Post & Subject	Qualification Required
1.	**Post Graduate Teachers (PGT)** 1.1 Informatics Practices, 1.2 Sociology, 1.3 Legal Studies 1.4 Fine Arts	For Senior Secondary Classes (XI & XII) Qualification: Post Graduate in the subject and BEd/MEd with at least 50% marks in each. For Informatics Practices – At least 50% marks in aggregate in BE/BTech/MCA/MSc in Computer Sci/IT and BEd with min 50% aggregate Marks.
2.	**Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT)** 2.1 English 2.2 Hindi 2.3 Sanskrit 2.4 Maths 2.5 Science 2.6 Social Science	For Secondary Classes. Qualification – Graduate in the subject and BEd with at least 50% marks in each and qualified in CTET or TET with min 60% marks.
3.	**Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT)** 3.1 Physical Education	For Secondary Classes. Qualification – Graduate in the subject and BEd with at least 50% marks in each.
4.	**Primary Teacher (PRT)** 4.1 All Subjects	For Primary Classes to teach all subjects. Qualification – Graduation with B.El.Edn/D.El.Ed at least 50% marks in each and Passed in CTET or TET with 60% marks.
5.	**Primary Teacher (PRT)** 5.1 Physical Education (Female Candidates Preferred)	Graduate in Physical Education or B.P.Ed with at least 50% marks
6.	**Primary Teacher (PRT)** 6.1 Special Educator (female candidates preferred)	Graduate with BEd (Special Educator) or BEd General with 01 year Diploma in Special Education with min 50% marks in each. **Preferably RCI certificate holder.**
7.	7.1 **TGT** - Music (Hindustani Classical/Western Folk) 7.2 **PRT** – Music (Hindustani Classical/Western Folk)	Graduate in the subject with min 50% marks
8.	**Primary Teacher (PRT)** 8.1 Band	Skilled / Qualified in Western/Folk/ Vocals/Instrumental music/Jazz Band and Ceremonial band training. Ex-servicemen preferred (Retired from Defence/Police).

9. Note/Eligibility

9.1 **Age:** 9.1.1 Fresh candidates - below 40 years.
9.1.2 Experienced candidates 40 – 55 years with 5 yrs experience in last 10 yrs.
9.2 **Computer Literacy** is mandatory for all the posts.
9.3 Proficiency to teach in **English & Hindi medium** is mandatory.
9.4 Preferably candidates who are qualified in AWES OST is preferred for Sl. Nos. 1 to 5 above.
9.5 **Pass in CTET/TET is mandatory for posts Sl No. 2 & 4.**
9.6 Non - OST qualified candidates, if selected, have to clear **OST** within two years of appointment, failing which their appointment will be terminated.
9.7 **Interviews only** for short listed candidates, tentatively in Feb 2026.
9.8 NO TA/DA admissible.
9.9 Army Public School, K Kamaraj Road, Bangalore is a private unaided school.
9.10 Download **Application Form from**: www.apsbangalore.edu.in **ONLY HARD COPY APPLICATIONS ARE ACCEPTED.**
9.11 Attach Bank draft for **Rs, 250/- (Rupees Two Hundred and Fifty) only** in favour of "ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL".
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TOUCHY AFFAIR Fear of perpetrators, delayed reporting, compromises among challenges

Social boycotts: State betters Maha Act, enforcement tricky

SUJAY B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

By defining and prohibiting 19 forms of social boycott and granting powers to police officers to register suo motu cases, the Karnataka Social Boycott (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Bill has improvised on a similar Act in Maharashtra, even as concerns remain on effective implementation.

The Maharashtra Protection of People from Social Boycott (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2016, was a first-of-its-kind legislation in the country.

The Act defines 15 forms of social boycott, including committing or causing to commit social ostracism on any grounds, preventing entry to educational institution, medical institution, community halls, places meant for charitable, religious or public purposes and a place of worship or pilgrimage, preventing children of one's community from playing with children of specific families, preventing a member from having social, religious, professional or business relations and so on.

KILLING SOCIETAL ILLS

SIMILARITIES WITH MAHARASHTRA ACT	WHAT'S NEW IN KARNATAKA BILL
3 year jail, Rs 1 lakh fine	**Suo motu** powers for police
Social boycott prohibition officer to be appointed	**Social boycott** prohibition officer to be a Group A officer
If the accused is convicted, court shall hear the victim on the quantum of sentence before passing sentence	**15 forms of social boycott in Karnataka legislation as opposed to 19 in the Maharashtra Act**

While the Karnataka Bill retains all these aspects, it also criminalises refusal to deal with, hire or do business with another person, denying opportunities for rendering service, abstaining from professional relations and refusing to do anything that is naturally done.

While both legislations mandate appointing a designated social boycott prohibition officer, the Karnataka Bill specifies that such an officer cannot be lesser than a group A government officer.

As per the Maharashtra law, the officer has to assist the police and submit a quarterly report to the magistrate and SP/police commissioner. While these aspects are absent in the Karnataka Bill, social welfare commissioner Rakesh Kumar K said additions would be made while framing rules.

Suo motu cases

While both legislations state that the victim or their family members can file a complaint with police, the Karnataka Bill has gone further and provided suo motu powers to the police to register cases when they get information of offence under this Bill.

"This is because the victim may not volunteer to submit a complaint because of the fear of those imposing the boycott," Kumar told *DH*.

The suo motu clause wasn't part of the Bill when it was taken up for discussion in the Assembly on December 18.

During the deliberations, senior Congress member T B Jayachandra said that a suo motu clause was needed, explaining that victims would not be able to "survive" if they register cases themselves.

He was seconded by veteran Congress member B R Patil, following which Social Welfare Minister Dr H C Mahadevappa assured to add this point in the Bill.

Both the legislations propose a jail term of three years and a fine of up to Rs 1 lakh.

Both laws are applicable not just to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, but to all communities facing social discrimination.

However, most of the victims of social boycott are from SC/ST communities.

Violation of rights

Piloting the Bill in the House, Mahadevappa said social boycotts were a direct violation of civil rights and against the basic principles of the Constitution.

The bill was appreciated by legislators cutting across parties, and was unanimously passed in both Houses. It is yet to be approved by Governor Thaawar Chand Gehlot.

However, concerns remain over effective implementation of the law. Explaining the on-ground challenges while dealing with atrocity cases, a senior police officer said all challenges that arise while dealing with SC/ST atrocity cases would also happen here.

Challenges

"The first challenge is the stranglehold of dominant castes. Secondly, there will be delayed reporting, and finally, there will be compromises even after reporting".

Explaining the challenges victims face while speaking about social ostracism, he said the inter-dependent village economy, where several things run akin to the barter system, scares victims from coming out.

The officer said merely providing suo motu powers would not bring about radical changes.

"In 99.9% of the cases, police have suo motu powers. Except in rape and POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) cases, police can register suo motu cases. But, there's an attitudinal problem. Police officers play it safe, and only when the SP insists on it, they take cases".

70% of deemed forest survey work completed: Minister

Tells officials to complete work soon and submit report

BENGALURU, DHNS

Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre on Saturday said about 70% of a joint survey to identify deemed forests in Karnataka has been completed and steps would be taken to ensure that the final list was free of errors.

He was speaking after reviewing works in Chikkaballapur division.

Khandre said the deemed forest list notified in 2022, after two rounds of survey, had several errors.

"It contained government buildings and patta (private) land. Forest and revenue authorities are conducting a joint survey. I have directed them to complete the exercise and submit report soon," he said.

This will be the third revision of deemed forests in Karnataka, taken up after a 1996 direction by the Supreme Court to protect green spaces not notified as forests.

The first report in 2002 estimated deemed forest in Karnataka at 9.94 lakh hectares (24.58 lakh acres). It was revised down to 3.3 lakh hectares (8.15 lakh acres) in May 2022.

The officials had then pointed to duplication, inclusion of private lands and other errors for dip in extent. The errors in new list had prompted the government to seek apex court's nod for another revision.

Khandre said the department will resolve the issue of encroachments in forests notified under Sec 4 of Karnataka Forests Act, which announces the government's intention to declare a forest as reserved.

According to law, the rights of occupants must be settled at the time of notification before issuing final notification under Sec 17 to declare the area as a reserved forest.

"Besides resolving confusions on Sec 4 forests, we will remove encroachments that took place after 2015," he said.

He directed officials in Chikkaballapur to crack down on illegal mining in forests and environment authorities to act against those polluting lakes.

BCU forms panel to look into question paper leak case

BENGALURU, DHNS: Dr Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University (BCU) has constituted an internal inquiry committee to look into the alleged question paper leak reported during the recent exams.

On January 1, 2026, the question paper of the Advanced Accounting for the fifth semester BCom course was allegedly circulated on various social media platforms.

The university authorities denied this allegation and the examination was held as per the schedule. However, KPCC general secretary A P Basavaraju had filed a complaint before the city police commissioner seeking a detailed inquiry into the issue.

Meanwhile, the university has constituted a committee, headed by Krishnaram H, a senior Syndicate member and instructed him to submit a report soon.

"The authenticity of the message has to be verified. We will initiate action based on the committee report," a university official said.

Cyber fraudsters dupe retired teacher of Rs 1.61 crore

KARWAR, PTI: Cyber fraudsters, impersonating as Mumbai police officials, allegedly swindled a 72-year-old retired teacher of Rs 1.61 crore by placing him under what they described as "digital arrest" via video calls.

The incident involved a resident of Tibetan Colony in Mundgod in the district, police said on Friday.

According to the complaint, Palden received a WhatsApp call from an unidentified person who introduced himself as an inspector from Colaba station. The caller said several ATM cards had been recovered from a terrorist arrested in Mumbai and that one of the cards was in Palden's name.

He was told that to avoid arrest, his funds needed to be deposited into a 'national fund' and that the money would be returned once the probe was over. Fearing legal consequences, Palden liquidated his fixed deposits and borrowed money from relatives, transferring Rs 1.61 crore to accounts mentioned by the fraudsters. Later realising he had been cheated, he approached the cyber crime police.

Withdraw G RAM G, restore right to work: Siddu to Centre

By destroying MGNREGA, corporates will benefit, says CM

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah addresses a news conference on VB-G RAM G Act in Bengaluru on Saturday. Deputy CM D K Shivakumar, Ministers Priyank Kharge and K H Muniyappa are seen.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar on Saturday demanded the rollback of the VB-G RAM G Act and restoration of MGNREGA.

The new law is "against decentralisation, federalism and the Constitution," Siddaramaiah told a news conference.

"The MGNREGA was introduced when Manmohan Singh was the PM. People were given the right to work. This has now been repealed," he said, adding that the Modi administration did not consult citizens or states.

Siddaramaiah said Karnataka has 71.18 lakh active MGNREGA workers, of which 51.6% are women. "By destroying MGNREGA, corporates are the ones that will benefit," he said.

"Earlier, 100 days of work were guaranteed. Now, work will be provided only in panchayats notified by the Centre. Also, there won't be any work for 60 days during the peak agriculture season," the CM said. He said it's the BJP's job to destroy schemes that benefit people. Guiding the BJP is the RSS.

"MGNREGA was a step towards realising Gandhi's dream of Gram Swaraj. The repealing of MGNREGA is the second assassination of Gandhi," he said.

Shivakumar asked BJP leaders to speak up. "You should either welcome or oppose the scrapping of MGNREGA," he said. "The new G RAM G law won't succeed even in BJP-governed states. It's impossible."

He asked the BJP to remove Gandhi's portraits from its offices. "Gift all the Gandhi photos to us. We'll put them to good use," the DCM said.

17 boats engaged in illegal sand extraction seized

UDUPI, DHNS: The Brahmavar police have intensified their crackdown on illegal sand mining activities and seized 17 boats used for extraction of sand from Swarna river.

A case has already been registered at Brahmavar station in connection with illegal sand mining and the matter is under investigation.

Acting on credible information that sand was being illegally mined using boats, particularly in Havanje village and Ammunje area of Ulluru village, police conducted targeted operation.

During the operation, 17 boats were seized. Police sources said further probe was underway to identify those involved.

KOPPAL CALLING

The Gavi Mutt in Koppal comes alive with colourful lighting ahead of the three-day annual Gavisiddeshwara jatra. Known as the 'kumbh mela' of the south, the fair is a confluence of the cultural and the spiritual and draws devotees from far and near. The extravaganza starts with a 'rathotsava' and will be inaugurated by Meghalaya Governor C H Vijayashankar, a former Mysuru-Kodagu MP who hails from Binnal in Kukanur taluk of the district, on Monday. DH PHOTO/BHARATH KANDAKUR

Man dies of cardiac arrest in court witness box

HUBBALLI, DHNS: A 69-year-old man collapsed and died while giving evidence in a civil court here on Saturday.

The deceased is Krishna Pawar (69). He collapsed while standing in the witness box and giving evidence.

He was shifted to Vivekanand hospital in the city, where doctors declared him dead.

Pawar was a resident of Gudur in Ilkal taluk of Bagalkot district.

His son, Santosh Pawar, is a police inspector in Haveri district.

Krishna Pawar had appeared in court to give evidence in a private case.

Cong MLA, son assault co-op bank staff union chief, aides

ATHANI (BELAGAVI DIST), DHNS: Belagavi District Central Cooperative (BDCC) Bank employees' union president Ningappa Karennavar was reportedly assaulted by bank director and Congress MLA Laxman Savadi, his son Chidanand and a supporter Srikant Algur, when he had been to the lawmaker's house to discuss about problems in the union, on Saturday.

Karennavar accused Chidanand of assaulting him till he bled and abusing him in foul language.

The union president said he, along with Basavaraj Kamatgi, a colleague, had been to Savadi's house.

"As they abused Kamatgi in foul language, I intervened. Then, Chidanand, along with over 15 persons, assaulted me and those accompanying me. They were angry as their relative Shankar Nandeshwar was transferred from the bank's Athani branch to Belagavi branch and blamed me for it".

He said he had good relations with the Jarkiholi family and suspected that this may have led to the assault. "My life is under threat from Savadi," Karennavar said.

The union president was given first aid at the community health centre in the town and shifted to a private hospital in Belagavi for treatment.

"Some employees complained that the union president had been demanding money from them. I asked them not to bring the matter to me and that they should resolve it among themselves," Savadi said.

"When Karennavar and others went out, Srikant Algur questioned them for bringing the issue to me. He was abused and casteist remarks were made against him. This led to a tussle between the two groups. We are in no way responsible for the incident. It appears that some political leaders have conspired against me and it is natural in politics. Investigations will bring out the truth," the legislator said.

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450-SQFT COMMERCIAL Office Space_Floor Wise For Sale Opposite to Vijayanagar Metro Station Contact: 7676900174 9945569909

Residential/ Commercial

Anjanapura

ANJANAPURA SITE for Sale 3rdA Block 3600 Sqft, Commercial BDA NE CORNER @13K, & 40X60 ADJOINING 80' ROAD @18K Per Sqft CALL OWNER RAJESH 9845167755

Outer Ring Road

ORR(SUMANAHALLI-LAGGARE BRIDGE) Corner Commercial Site 2,800 Sft. "A"&"E" Khatha facing ORR at Chowdeshwarinagar Call:998055558

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Sites

Anjanapura

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Banashankari

"WANTED 40X60 Site/ old demolition House North or East only Padmanabhnagar, Banashankari 3rd_Stage, Girinagar "Sri.Ganesh Estates" 9845286505"

Nagarabhavi

***WANTED* HOUSE,** Site, Flat VISHVESHWARAIAH, KEMPEGOWDA LAYOUT,NAGARBHAVI, MALLATHAHALLLI 20x30, 30x40,40x60. ABHILASHA CONSULTANT. 9480565758

JOB
To Place your Classified Ads Contact:
9886213331

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BUYING/ SELLING 20x30,30x40,40x60 50x80 BDA sites at VISHVESHWARAIAH LAYOUT, BSK 6th-stage. Contact: 9844533371/ 9341733480

BUILDERS ESSENTIAL

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WE FIX LEAKING_ROOF,TANK, SUMP,BATHROOM, SKYLIGHT,HOUSE PAINTING, TILING,CARPENTRY, EPOXY,CIVIL WORKS. Call: 9448572697

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LEAKAGE... LEAKAGE... Old/New Building, Sump, Bathroom, Wallcrack, Skylight, Terrace Waterproofing done by New Technology- 9880916988

RENTAL PROPERTIES

Accommodation Available

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FOR RENT: PRIME COMMERCIAL BUILDING, Mariappa Rd, off CMR Main Rd, Kalyan Nagar. Ideal for Clinic, Diagnostic, Tuition, Corporate Office, Banks. GF-300 sqft, FF- 1250 sqft, SF-1250 sqft, TF-500 sqft. Ample parking (4 cars & 25 two-wheelers). 24/7 power & water. Ph: 9845123866, 9880016254. Location: Google Maps -13.021880, 77.638321

1,25,000 SFT Prime Commercial Land Suitable for Office Space, Outlet Mall & Warehouse Available For Rent in Bidadi. Contact 9972181837

AVAILABLE II Floor and Basement COMMERCIAL SPACE each 2000 Sqft for Rent for office, showroom in HSR 6th Sector MAIN ROAD. Call 9880022644

General

INJESUS REASONABLE rent for 10x10 Sqft business accommodation at Sampige Layout, Amarjyothinagar Vijaynagar, Bangalore 9742966068

BUSINESS

Business Offers

General

BUSINESS PROPOSAL–DIGI Monte Pvt Ltd invites investors and partners for a scalable, future-ready, high-profit business model. Call 7207915007

IF YOU are running well-established business, Schools, Colleges, hospitals and the next generation is not interested in your business. Call_Arun 9945699789. WE HAVE BUYERS.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC TENDER NOTICE

Reflections Interior Products Pvt. Ltd.
B-56, 5th Cross, ITI Industrial Estate, Mahadevapura Post, Whitefield, Bangalore- 560048, India. +91 99006 64477

(Implementing Agency approved under Technology Upgradation Assistance to Exporters / Entrepreneurs Scheme, Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed manufacturers / authorised suppliers having minimum three (3) years experience for procurement of the following approved machinery:

1.	CNC 3D Rod Bending Machine	1 No.
2.	CNC Milling / Turning Machine	1 No.
3.	Custom-Made Spot Welding Machine	1 No.
4.	Standard Spot Welding Machines	2 Nos.
5.	CNC Laser Cutting Machine (Metal)	1 No.
6.	CNC Laser Cutting Machine (Non-Metal)	1 No.
7.	Thermo Forming Machine	1 No.
8.	Industrial Sewing Machines	2 Nos.
9.	Custom Industrial Sewing Machine	1 No.
10.	Finishing Equipment	25 Nos.
11.	Punch Press Machine	1 No.
12.	Assembly Tables	30 Nos.
13.	Pneumatic Compressor	1 No.
14.	Diesel Generator	1 No.
15.	Installation & Commissioning Services	

Tender Type: Two-Bid System (Technical & Financial Bids)
EMD: 2% of quoted value.
Tender documents may be downloaded free from www.ripplighting.com/tenders Or collected from the above Head Office by paying ₹2,000/- as tender document charges.
Last date for submission: 26/01/2026
Opening of Technical Bids: Same day at 2.00 PM
The company reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.
For Reflections Interior Products Pvt. Ltd.
Authorised Signatory

PUBLIC NOTICE
The General public are hereby notified that, on behalf of our clients we are scrutinizing/ investigating the marketable title of **(1)Sri.K.VASUDEV** S/o Sri.D.R.Kodandarama Reddy; his son **(2)Sri.V.MANJUNATH;** and **(3)Sri.K.SHIVARAM** S/o Sri.D.R.Kodandarama Reddy, both are residing at: No.103/2, First Floor, 9th Cross, Patel Lane, Domlur, Bangalore-560071, with respect to the Schedule Property.
Apart from the said Owners, if any other person/s have any manner of right, title, interest, or share or claim over the Schedule property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, succession as co-owner or legal heirs or joint family member, or by way of sale, lease, sub-lease, mortgage, gift, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, pre-emption or otherwise howsoever, they are hereby called upon to file their objection/s or claims with the undersigned (along with the photocopies of the documents based on which they rely for asserting their rights), **within 10 days** from the date of publication of this notice. Objection/s received thereafter will not be binding on our clients.
SCHEDULE
Item No.1 property of Sri. K.Vasudev & Sri.V.Manjunath:
All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Municipal No.35/2, PID No.27-1-35/2 (portion of property No.35), measuring on East 30 ft, on West 30 ft, on North 44 ft and on South 46 ft, totally measuring 1350 Sq.ft., situated at Kalidasa Marga, Gandhinagar, Bangalore-560009 and bounded on:
East by : Property bearing No.35 of Sri.K.Shivaram
West by : Kalidasa Marga
North by : R.Srinivasa Reddy's property
South by : 10 ft wide Common Passage
Item No.2 property of Sri.K.Shivaram:
All that piece and parcel of the immovable property bearing Municipal No.35, PID No.27-1-35, measuring on East 30 ft, on West 30 ft, on North 47 ft and on South 47 ft, totally measuring 1410 Sq.ft, situated at Kalidasa Marga, Gandhinagar, Bangalore-560009 and bounded on:
East by : D.R.Neellappa Reddy's property
West by : Property bearing No.35/2 of Sri.K.Vasudev & Sri.V.Manjunath
North by : R.Srinivasa Reddy's property
South by : 10 ft wide Common Passage leading to Kalidasa Marga.
Sd/- **S.F. GOUTAM CHAND,** Advocate, **GOUTAM ASSOCIATES,** No.60, 2nd Floor, Old Kanakapura Road, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru - 560004

PERSONAL

Change of Name

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **MONISHA M, MONISHA MOHAN DAS, MONISHA MOHAN KUMAR and MONISHA MOHAN,** residing at # 144, Sri Bhagavathi Nilaya, Raghuram Layout, Ramachandrapura, Jalahalli Post, Bengaluru-560013, declare that all the above names belong to me only and the same person. Henceforth I shall be called & known as **MONISHA MOHAN** Vide affidavit dated: 02.01.2026 before notary Chandrakala, Bengaluru.

I, SMT. Renuka.S W/o R. Somashekar, aged 53 years,residing at #4/2, 4thCross, 4thMain, Sri. Ranga Nilaya, Pipeline,Malleshwaram, Bengaluru-560003, have changed my name from RENUKA.S to RENUKA SOMASHEKAR vide affidavit dated03-01-2026 sworn before Notary Puttaramaiah, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, **RAVICHANDRA (Old Name)** R/o. No. 2/4/48, Near Mahadev Mandir, Hatten Galli, Aland Gulbarga-585302, Have changed my name as **RAVICHANDRA PATIL (New Name)** Vide Affidavit Dtd. :01-01-2026 Sworn Before Advocate & Notary Public **B. R. SHASHIKALA** at Bengaluru

CHANGE OF NAME
I, SUNITA (Old Name) R/o. Plot No. 08, E/1/2432, Ganesh Nagar, Opp. Hotel Sun International, New Jewargi Road, Gulbarga-585101, Have changed my name as **SUNITA JEWARGI (New Name)** Vide Affidavit Dtd. :01-01-2026 Sworn Before Advocate & Notary Public **B. R. SHASHIKALA** at Bengaluru

I, SHASHI Bala Srivastava w/o Anoop Srivastava R/o 07 Prestige Dorchester, Jakkur Bengaluru 560064, have changed my name as Shashi Srivastava

PROPERTY CORNER

BUNGALOW FOR SALE
5989 Sq ft, Furnished 4 BHK Bungalow for sale in Baglur. It's 20 minutes drive to Airport. Price 5cr. Call owner :
9113209192

THANKSGIVING

Book your Thanksgiving Advertisement in Deccan Herald for ANNUAL FEAST OF INFANT JESUS ON 14th January 2026 @ 2100 with GST (Size 4cmx5cm)
For more Details Contact:
Ph :080 - 45557163 | 164 | 9731810277

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HM defends suspension of Ballari SP, says he failed to handle situation

Sriramulu bats for Nejjur, demands revocation of suspension

TUMAKURU/BALLARI, DHNS

Defending the suspension of Superintendent of Police Pavan Nejjur, Home Minister G Parameshwara said on Saturday that the SP was not present at the spot during the group clash on Thursday night.

He failed to handle the situation. He should have been present at the spot, issued directions and brought the situation under control. Since that did not happen, he was placed on suspension, the Home minister told reporters here.

Replying to a query that the SP had taken charge only a few hours before the incident, Parameshwara said, "It is not important whether he reported to duty on the same day (of incident) or one hour back. Duty is duty. He is not new to the department. IPS officers are trained to handle such situations any time. If he had acted swiftly and promptly, he could have prevented the situation from escalating." He did not discharge his duties properly. Hence he was suspended., the Home minister said.

A mobile video clip shows DIG Vartika Katiyar and Superintendent of Police Pavan Nejjur taking stock of the situation at the clash site in Ballari on Thursday night. Nejjur was suspended for not being present at the spot.

Parameshwara added that an experienced SP will be posted to Ballari district soon.

SP present on the spot

While the Home minister claimed the SP was not present in the spot, video clips purportedly showing Nejjur with DIG Vartika Katiyar at the spot have gone viral in social media.

The videos show Katiyar, along with the SP, taking stock of the situation at the spot where supporters of Bharath Reddy and Janardhana Reddy clashed, pelted stones and opened fire in the air. Katiyar is heard asking the SP "How many people have gathered?." Also, the SP was seen giving instructions to his subordinates. And both the officers were seen inspecting the bloodstain on the road where the Congress worker suffered bullet injuries, who eventually succumbed to injuries.

Meanwhile, former minister B Sriramulu demanded the state government to revoke suspension of SP Pavan Nejjur. The SP, who took charge only 12 hours back, should have been given some time. The suspension was an 'eyewash'. Instead the DySP, who acted as an agent of the Congress MLA, should have been suspended, he said.

Sriramulu urged the government to arrest the private gunman of the Congress leader who killed an innocent man, and suspend the DySP.

Police dismiss rumours on suicide bid by officer

The Ballari police have quashed rumours that SP Pavan Nejjur, who was suspended on the day he took charge as Ballari SP over the violent clash, has tried to end his life.

A clarification issued by the police, following the spread of fake news on TV channels and social media platforms that the SP, upset over his suspension, attempted suicide, said Nejjur was staying at a friend's farmhouse near Sira and that he didn't attempt to end his life.

Cong fact-finding committee to submit report in 3 days

MLA, aide escalated situation, some leaders tell panel

BELLARI, DHNS

The Congress fact-finding committee, led by veteran leader H M Revanna, to uncover the truth behind the group clash that led to the death of a party worker, on Saturday received mixed reactions from the partymen.

A section of Congress leaders blamed both the sides for the violent group clash, while a few party leaders are believed to have told the committee that it was MLA Nara Bharath Reddy and his aide Satish Reddy who escalated the situation.

The KPCC committee, comprising former MP Jayaprakash Hegde, Challakere MLA Raghumurthy, MP Kumar Nayak, MLCs Jakkappanavar and Basanagouda Badarli, collected the information from the party workers, those connected to the incident and the senior police officials. They called MLAs Bharath Reddy and J N Ganesh separately and took their views on the incident.

Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan consoles the family members of Rajashekhar, who died in the clash, and extends a financial assistance of Rs 25 lakh to them in Ballari on Saturday. Kampli MLA J N Ganesh is seen.

Revanna told reporters, "Following the instructions of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and KPCC president, also the deputy chief minister, D K Shivakumar, we collected information from the elected representatives, police officials and eyewitnesses on the Thursday night clash. We will submit a report to the government within three days. We will not reveal the report to the media. The government will make the report public.The government and the party will provide compensation to the family members of the deceased youth."

Meanwhile, Ballari Incharge and Housing Minister B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan on Saturday visited the family of Rajashekhar, a Congress worker killed in the clash. He provided a compensation of Rs 25 lakh to the kin and assured them of providing a house from Slum Board.

H M REVANNA
Congress leader

"We have collected information from the elected representatives, police officials and eyewitnesses on the Thursday night clash. We will submit a report to the government within three days.

GULBARGA ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly owned government of Karnataka undertaking)

No. GESCOM/CEE(O)/SEE(MIS)/EE(RA)/AEE(RA)/AO(RA)/2025-26/73577-83 Dated: 03.01.2026

:: NOTIFICATION ::

BEFORE THE KARNATAKA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION, No.16, C-1, MILLERS TANK BED AREA, VASANTHANAGAR, BANGALORE – 560 052

IN THE MATTER OF:

An application for Annual Performance Review for 2024-25 of Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited under Section 61 & 62 of the Electricity Act, 2003 read with relevant provisions of KERC (Tariff) Regulations, KERC (Terms & Conditions for Determination of Tariff for Distribution and Retail Sale of Electricity) Regulations, 2006 and KERC (Multi Year Transmission, Distribution and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2024.

Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited (GESCOM), Station Main Road, Kalaburagi 585102 ..... PETITIONER

N O T I C E

1. Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company (GESCOM) has filed an application before the Hon'ble Commission for Annual Performance Review for the financial year 2024-25 viz-a-viz the Annual Revenue Requirement for 2024-25 approved in Tariff Order-2024 dated 28.02.2024. The Hon'ble Commission is in the process of considering the same. The summary of the application is as below;
2. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW: Financial position of GESCOM in 2024-25 against the ARR approved by the Hon'ble Commission in the Tariff Order-2024 is indicated below;

Sl. No.	Particulars	As approved by KERC in Tariff Order 2024	GESCOM Proposal for APR based on Annual Accounts
	Energy Sales (MU)	9132.57	8986.82
A.	**INCOME (Rs.in Cr):**		
	Revenue from sale of power	**7789.88**	**8123.09**
B.	**EXPENDITURE (Rs.in Cr):**		
i.	Power Purchase cost including Tr. Charges	6218.46	6332.28
ii.	O&M Costs	1195.39	1274.16
iii.	Depreciation	252.86	245.24
iv.	Interest & Finance Charges	378.29	550.09
v.	Return on Equity	0.00	326.09
vi.	Other Debits	0.00	0.00
vii.	Funds towards consumer contribution	0.50	0.00
viii.	**Less: Other income**	**(177.83)**	**(136.87)**
ix	Less: Penalty for increase in distribution loss beyond upper limit	0.00	(10.76)
	Total Expenditure (i to ix):	7867.67	8580.22
	APR surplus/Deficit of previous year	111.28	0.00
	Net Expenditure	**7756.39**	**8580.22**
C.	Net Surplus /(Deficit) (A-B)	**33.49**	**(457.13)**

3. The Net Revenue Deficit of Rs. 457.13 Crores may be passed on to the consumers, as may be decided by the Commission, in terms of MYT Regulations.
4. Application filed before Commission is also available at all O&M Circle Offices (Offices of the Superintending Engineers, (Ele), Kalaburagi, Bidar, Bellari, Raichur, Koppal and GESCOM, Corporate Office, Station main Road , Kalaburagi – 585102.
5. Pursuant to Section 5 of KERC (Tariff) Regulations, 2000 and read with relevant provisions of KERC (Tariff) Regulations, KERC (Terms & Conditions for Determination of Tariff for Distribution and Retail Sale of Electricity) Regulations, 2006 and KERC (Multi Year Transmission, Distribution and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2024, it is hereby notified that the persons who are interested in filing their objections to the above petition may file the same with the Receiving Officer, O/o the Secretary, Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission, No.16, C-1, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasanthanagar, Bangalore – 560 052, along with the documents on which they want to rely upon, in six sets, duly supported by an affidavit within thirty days from the date of first publication of this Tariff Notification and also indicate whether they want to be heard in person. A copy of the objection may be marked to Superintending Engineer (Ele.,) MIS, Corporate Office, Station main Road , Kalaburagi – 585102 for furnishing replies to the objections.
6. For reference of those who are interested, copies of the petition are available for inspection at all O&M Circle Offices (Offices of the Superintending Engineers, (Ele), Kalaburagi, Bidar, Bellari, Raichur, Koppal).
7. They may also obtain copies of the required portion of the petition by paying photocopying charges.
8. Further, full set of the petition together with supporting material will also be made available to the interested persons by the Superintending Engineer Ele., of, O&M Circles as in para 4, on payment of Rs. 700/- and the same is also available for sale at GESCOM Corporate Office, Station main Road , Kalaburagi – 585102.
9. The soft copy of the APR petition can be viewed on the website of GESCOM **(https://gescom.karnataka.gov.in/).**

For Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited
Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Ele.,)
MIS Corporate Office, Station main Road , Kalaburagi – 585102

DIPR/Kalaburagi/931/KSMC&A/2025-26

Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
No.8, "Samparka Soudha", Dr. Rajkumar Road, Rajajinagar 1st Block, Bengaluru-560 010. Telephone : 080-22024000
e-mail : mdkrdcl@gmail.com, cekrdcl@gmail.com Website: http://www.krdcl.in

No. KRDCL/IFB /2025-26/21 Date: 03.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION ON TURNKEY BASIS (Call-5)

(through KPP Portal)

Karnataka Road Development Corporation Limited (KRDCL) invites bids for **Construction of High-level Minor Bridge across Krishna River Tributory near Shilahalli Village in Lingasugur Taluk, Raichur District** on Turnkey Basis based on Tenderer's own Design on two cover system. Approx. cost of work : **Rs. 9.58 Crore.** EMD Amount : **Rs.9.58 Lakh** (Rs.1.00 Lakh through KPP Portal & Rs.8.58 lakh in the form of Bank Guarantee). **Period of Completion (including monsoon):** 24 months.

Interested applicants can view and download the complete proposal documents from GoK KPP portal **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in (a)** Last date for submission of bids through KPP portal: **23.01.2026 upto 17:30 Hrs. (b)** Date and time of opening of Technical bids is : **27.01.2026 at 11:30 Hrs.**

*Please note henceforth, any changes in the schedule will not be published through Newspapers and further changes if any, will be updated only on KPP Portal / KRDCL website : **https://www.krdcl.in**

DIPR/CP/YC/4845/2025-26

Sd/- Chief Engineer KRDCL, Bengaluru

BENGALURU EAST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Assistant Director, Animal Husbandry, Ground Floor, K.R. Puram, Bengaluru - 560036.

No: BECC/2025-26/IND0001/CALL-2 Date: 03-01-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Assistant Director, Animal Husbandry, BECC, Bengaluru invites Proposal in Two Cover System from eligible Suppliers who are registered in the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal for the **Supply of Combined Vaccine (5 in 1) for Stray Dogs**.

Tender Reference No: **BECC/2025-26/IND0001/CALL-2**

1) The Tender Documents may be Downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in 2)** Date, Time and Venue of Pre Bid Meeting: **06-01-2026 at 12.30 PM at the Office of the Assistant Director, Animal Husbandry, Ground Floor, K.R. Puram, Bengaluru - 560036. 3)** Last Date and Time for Submission of Queries in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal: **06-01-2026 upto 5.00 PM. 4)** Last Date and Time for Submission of Tender in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal: **12-01-2026 upto 5.00 PM. 5)** Date and Time of Opening of Technical Bid in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal: **13-01-2026 at 5.10 PM. 6)** EMD Amount: **As per Schedule of Requirement. 7)** Address for Communication: **Office of the Assistant Director, Animal Husbandry, Ground Floor, K.R. Puram, Bengaluru - 560036.** Phone: **8296184712,** E-Mail: **adahkrp01@gmail.com.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/-
Assistant Director, Animal Husbandry, BECC.

ನಗರಸಭಾ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಚಿಂತಾಮಣಿ
ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ

ಕಛೇರಿ ವಿಳಾಸ: ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ರಸ್ತೆ, ವಾರ್ಡ್ 10, ಎನ್ ಆರ್ ಬಡಾವಣೆ ಚಿಂತಾಮಣಿ–563 125, ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 08154–252056/ ಸಹಾಯವಾಣಿ: 08154–252117, ಇ–ಮೇಲ್:itstaff_ulb_chintamanicity@yahoo.in, cmc.chintamani@gmail.com, ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್:www.chintamanicity.gov.in

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ನಸಚಿ/ತಾಂಶಾ/ಸಿ.ಆರ್/105/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 01.01.2026

ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೆ.ಜಿ 1 & 2 ದಸ್ತಾವೇಜಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ರಾಜ್ಯಪಾಲರ ಪರವಾಗಿ ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು ನಗರಸಭೆ ಚಿಂತಾಮಣಿ ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ ಇವರು ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಕೆಟಿಪಿಪಿ 2000 ಅಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿಸಿರುವ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ/ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಗಳಿಂದ ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: (1) DMA/2025-26/IND5644/CALL-2, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ 38.57 ಲಕ್ಷ, (2) DMA/2025-26/IND5641/CALL-2, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ 4.00 ಲಕ್ಷ & (3) DMA/2025-26/IND5643/CALL-2, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ 10.00 ಲಕ್ಷ. ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಲು ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಮೂದಿಸಿರುವ ಷರತ್ತುಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು. **ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 16.01.2026 ರಂದು ಸಮಯ ಸಂಜೆ 17:30 ಗಂಟೆಯವರೆಗೆ,** ಬಿಡ್ ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **19.01.2026 ರಂದು ಸಮಯ ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ 11:30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ** ತೆರೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಪೌರಾಯುಕ್ತರು, ನಗರಸಭೆ, ಚಿಂತಾಮಣಿ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ/ಆರ್.ಓ.ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:349/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

SAMAGRA SHIKSHNA ABHIYAAN
OFFICE OF THE DDPI & EX-OFFICIO,
DISTRICT PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR, SSK, RAICHUR-584101

NO.A2/SSKR/KGBV FOOD TENDER PRA/2025-26 DATE: 03-01-2026

TENDER NOTICE

This is to bring notice to the public that for the year 2025-26 tenders has been invited for supply of prepared food for (Preparation at the site and supply) 06 KGBV residential schools separately through short term call-2 tender. Interested Bidders can be participated in the tenders through online portal http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in. last date for applying the tender is 20-01-2026.Amount put to tender:- Rs. 51,00,000/-

Sd/- DDPI & EX-OFFICIO,
DISTRICT PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR
SAMAGRA SHIKSHA KARNATAKA-RAICHUR

DIP/RCR/364/KSMC&A/636/2025-26

HUBLI ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
NOTIFICATION

BEFORE THE KARNATAKA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION, No. 16, C-1, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasantnagar, Bengaluru-560 052.

No. HESCOM/DF/CA/DCA/AO(RA)/25-26/cys-9318 Dated : 01-01-2026

IN THE MATTER OF:

An application for Annual Performance Review (APR) for FY 2024-25 of Hubli Electricity Supply Company Limited under Section 61 & 62 of Electricity Act, 2003, read with relevant KERC (Tariff) Regulations, KERC Terms & Conditions for Determination of Tariff for Distribution and Retail Sale of Electricity) Regulations, 2006 and KERC (Multi Year Transmission, Distribution and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2024

Hubli Electricity Supply Company Limited (HESCOM)
P.B. Road, Navanagar, Hubli-580025 ..... PETITIONER

N O T I C E

1. As per Regulation No. 14(d) of the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (Multi Year Transmission, Distribution and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2024, Hubli Electricity Supply Company Limited (HESCOM) has filed an application before the Hon'ble Commission for Approval of Annual Performance Review (APR) for FY 2024-25 viz-a-viz the Annual Revenue Requirement for 2024-25 approved in Tariff Order – 2024 dated 28.02.2024. The Hon'ble Commission is in the process of considering the same. The summary of the application is as below;
2. **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW:** Financial position of HESCOM in 2024-25 against the ARR approved by the Hon'ble Commission in the Tariff Order 2024 is indicated below.

Sl. No.	Particulars	ARR As approved by KERC in Tariff Order 2024	HESCOM Proposal for APR based on Annual Accounts
	Energy Sales (MU)	13109.89	13977.36
A.	**INCOME (Rs.in Cr):**		
	Revenue from sale of power	11388.68	12315.26
B.	**EXPENDITURE (Rs.in Cr):**		
i.	Power Purchase cost including Tr. Charges	9039.37	9504.51
ii.	O&M Costs	1686.99	1,923.47
iii.	Depreciation	393.26	549.84
iv.	Interest & Finance Charges	638.38	686.39
v.	Return on Equity		422.85
vi.	Other Debits		25.34
vii.	Funds towards consumer Relations/Education	0.50	0.21
viii.	Net prior period (credits) / charges		33.60
ix	Less: Other income	-321.86	-226.46
	Total Expenditure (i to ix):	**11436.64**	**12919.75**
	APR surplus/Deficit of previous year	-101.04	
	Net Expenditure	**11335.60**	**12919.75**
C.	**Net Deficit (A-B) (Rs.in Cr):**	**53.07**	**-604.49**

3. **The Net Revenue Deficit of Rs.604.49 Crores may be passed on to the consumers, as may be decided by the Commission, in terms of MYT Regulations.**
4. Pursuant to Section 5 of KERC (Tariff) Regulations, 2000 and read with relevant provisions of KERC (Tariff) Regulations, KERC (Terms & Conditions for Determination of Tariff for Distribution and Retail Sale of Electricity) Regulations, 2006 and KERC (Multi Year Transmission, Distribution and Retail Supply Tariff) Regulations, 2024, it is hereby notified that the persons who are interested in filing their objections to the above petition may file the same with the Receiving Officer, O/o The Secretary, KERC, No. 16, C-1, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasant nagar, Bengaluru-560052, along with the documents on which they want to rely upon, in six sets, duly supported by an affidavit **within Thirty days from the date of publication of this Notification** in the Newspapers and also to indicate whether they want to be heard in person or not. A copy of the objection may be marked to the Controller, HESCOM, Corporate office, P.B. Road, Navanagar, Hubli-580025 **or** Controller, HESCOM, Corporate office, Vidyuth Bhavan, Gopanakoppa, Hubballi-580023 for furnishing replies to the said objections. Interested persons may file their objections within the stipulated time.
5. For reference of those who are interested, copies of the petition are available for inspection at all O&M Zonal/Circle/Divisional Offices of HESCOM, and also at HESCOM, Corporate Office, P.B. Road, Navanagar, Hubli-580025 **or** HESCOM, Corporate office, Vidyuth Bhavan, Gopanakoppa, Hubballi-580023, during office working hours.
6. They may also obtain copies of the required portion of the petition by paying photocopying charges.
7. Further, a full set of petition together with supporting material will also be made available to the interested persons by all Chief Engineers (EI) Zonal Offices, Superintending Engineers (EI) O&M Circle Offices, Executive Engineers (EI) O&M Division offices and at Corporate Office of HESCOM on payment of Rs. 100.00 (Rs. One Hundred Only) +applicable GST.
8. The soft copy of the APR application of HESCOM can be viewed on HESCOM's website (hescom.karnataka.gov.in).

For Hubli Electricity Supply Company Limited
Sd/-
Controller
HESCOM, Corporate Office,
Navanagar, Hubli-580 025.

DIPR/DWD/KSMCA/1060/2025-26

New crest gates for Tungabhadra dam by June, says CM

RAICHUR, DHNS: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday assured that new crest gates would be installed at the Tungabhadra Dam by June, regardless of difficulties or cost, to ensure water supply for the upcoming monsoon crop and to keep the promise made to farmers.

Speaking after inaugurating the Ambadevi Maharathotsava and Jamboo Savari on the premises of Ambamath in Sindhanur taluk, the chief minister said the government was firmly committed to implementing irrigation projects.

He noted that works, including the Papayya Tunnel and installation of 33 gates, had already been completed at a cost of Rs 431 crore.

Siddaramaiah said it was heartening that Sindhanur MLA Hampanagouda Badarli was effectively utilising the funds allocated by the state government for the constituency's development.

He said that Rs 13.42 crore had been spent on constructing and developing drinking water tanks, Rs 71 crore on the Salagunda lift irrigation project, Rs 43.10 crore on the Inner Ballari lift irrigation project, and Rs 29 crore on a bridge-cum-barrage near Mullur village, benefiting farmers in the region.

Dental course gets sheen back: All seats taken for 2nd yr in a row

Expert attributes uptick to shortfall in availability of seats

BENGALURU, DHNS

Demand for the undergraduate dental course –BDS– is on the upswing once again after registering a dip for a brief period.

All seats for the BDS course found takers in 2024 and 2025, reaffirming the programme's appeal among students. However, 1,398 seats were left unfilled in 2022, while 198 seats found no takers in 2023, according to data sourced from the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA).

Experts attributed the spike in demand to the shortfall in the number of available seats.

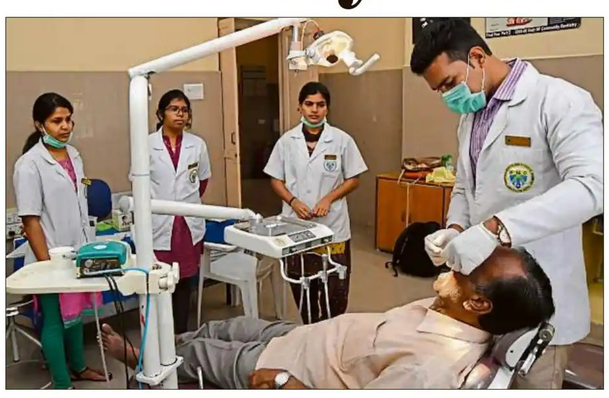
"The number of new seats for the BDS course has not been on the higher side, compared to the medical programme. No new dental colleges are being established, which can add to the existing pool of BDS seats," said Dr H J Jaikrishna, senior dentist and former member of the Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) syndicate.

Dr Jaikrishna pointed out that dental courses were less expensive than medical degrees.

"Furthermore, thanks to the Make In India initiative, the cost of dental equipment required to set up clinics has come down drastically, which means that students passing out with a BDS degree can set up their practice without having to pursue a postgraduate programme," he added.

Minister for Medical Education Dr Sharan Prakash Patil expressed his surprise at the fact that all dental seats had been allotted this year.

"This is indicative of the transparent manner in which KEA and the Medical Education Department have completed the seat allotment process," the minister said.



The Medical Education Department officials say that delays in the allotment of medical seats, coupled with the many cases pending in courts, have prompted students to opt for the dental course as a viable alternative. DH FILE PHOTO

Students scoop up medical and dental seats

Course	Intake	Vacant seats
Pharmacy	3,813	791
Yoga Naturopathy	464	174
Veterinary	366	24
AYUSH	8,945	995
Dental	2,709	000
Medical	10,559	000

An official in the Medical Education Department said that delays in the allotment of medical seats, coupled with the many cases pending in courts, had prompted students to opt for the dental course as a viable alternative.

Over 21k nursing seats found no takers

Meanwhile, demand for nursing courses continued its downward spiral this year, with 21,664 of the available 34,050 seats going unfilled.

In 2024, 16,744 of the 31,812 seats went unallotted, while 22,777 seats against a total of 33,490 found no takers in 2023.

Oddly enough, the number of vacant seats was markedly lower in 2022, when the total number of available seats was also less – only 1,384 of the 7,332 available seats went unallotted.

In a first, the number of unallotted seats for the veterinary course has risen to double digits – 24 – this year.

"There are very few seats for the veterinary course, and KEA must examine the reasons as to why these many seats were left unfilled. KEA must take steps to ensure all seats are filled," said Dr Patil.

Belthangady court asks SIT to submit final report

Order deferred till submission of report

MANGALURU, DHNS

The Belthangady JMFC court has declined the request of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) seeking permission to initiate action against the accused in the 'mass burials' case, as per the complaint report submitted by it.

The court clarified that an order on this matter would be passed only after submission of the final report.

The SIT was required to submit its report within 90 days of the arrest of the complainant witness. While the complainant witness, Chinnaiah C N, was in judicial custody, SIT submitted a 3,900-page report on Nov 20 under Sec 215 of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

In its report, SIT explained how false evidence had been produced and how the court was allegedly misled in the case. The SIT had sought directions for investigation under Sec 379 of BNSS against accused Chinnaiah C N, Mahesh Shetty Thimmarody, Girish Mattannavar, Jayanth T, Vittal Gowda and Sujatha Bhat for allegedly misleading the court.

The court noted the SIT's observation in its report that Mahesh Shetty Thimmarody, Girish Mattannavar, Jayanth T, Vittal Gowda and Sujatha Bhat had not cooperated with the investigation. However, based on the report presently submitted by SIT, the court said it would not pass any order at this stage and directed the SIT to submit final report in the case, said additional civil judge T H Vijayendra.

Meanwhile, Parshwanath Jain, spokesperson of Dharmasthala Manjunatha temple, had filed an application seeking permission of the court to be impleaded in the proceedings as the temple was a victim in the case, on Dec 31, 2025.

As public prosecutor Divyaraj Hegde sought time to file objections to the temple's application, the judge adjourned the hearing on that matter to January 23.

Cong announces...

MGNREGA, From Page 3

He said MGNREGA was the most decentralised scheme but the Union government decides everything now with panchayats being "reduced to the role of a clerk".

Asked whether the Congress governments in states would call for not implementing the new law, he said the present law is impossible to implement and they will explore all possibilities to stop the "anti-people law". All Opposition parties have opposed it in Parliament and the Congress leadership will discuss with Opposition chief ministers and leaders soon, he said.

Questioning how cash-strapped states spend on the scheme, Congress General Secretary (Communications) Jairam Ramesh claimed that "centralisation" is the only guarantee in the new law, with the Centre deciding when, where and how to implement the scheme.

Venugopal said the agitation programme starts with press conferences at districts on January 10 followed by a one-day fast at district headquarters or near Gandhi or Ambedkar statues.

The phase 2 of the protest between January 12 and 30 will see panchayat-level meetings, distribution of letters by Kharge and top leader Rahul Gandhi to all MGNREGA workers and gram pradhans among others, Assembly-level meetings and culminate on January 30, the martyrdom anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, with peaceful sit-in protests at ward level.

The phase 3 – January 31 to February 25 – will see district-level dharnas till February 6 and state-level gherao of Assembly or Raj Bhavans or Union government offices between February 7 and 15. Congress will also organise four major rallies across the country between February 16 and 25.

Problematic internet use can rewire brain: Study

Internet, From Page 3

Emotion regulation was particularly affected, with individuals showing difficulty managing negative feelings and maintaining goal-directed behaviour during emotional distress. They also found elevated levels of anxiety and impulsivity among those with PIU.

Kumar explained that rapid scrolling and instant content switching can alter the brain's natural reward system.

"When you're scrolling very fast, dopamine becomes dysregulated, releasing very quickly. Other activities that require spending time, maybe 20 or 30 minutes before you get that feeling of satisfaction, become monotonous because you've become accustomed to this immediate release," Kumar explained.

This pattern can create a cycle where individuals increasingly turn to internet activities to relieve negative emotions, while simultaneously losing interest in offline activities that once provided satisfaction.

The research suggests that interventions to help with PIU should address multiple factors simultaneously: enhancing emotional regulation skills, addressing impulsiveness, and strengthening cognitive control through targeted exercises.

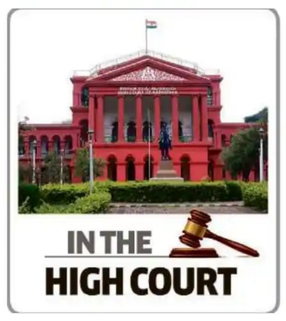
MAGNITUDE OF FAITH

A large number of devotees take part in the Banashankari Devi Rathotsava in Badami taluk, Bagalkot district, on Saturday. The richly decorated chariot, adorned with colourful flags, flower garlands and banana stems, carried the festival idol of the goddess. Coconuts, bananas and lemons were offered to the chariot wheels to fulfil vows. Despite traffic disruptions and long walks of up to 5 km, devotees participated in the annual car festival with full faith and devotion. DH PHOTO/INDRAKUMAR DASTENAVAR

HC refuses to quash case against 3 charged with extortion

They claim to be whistleblowers against sand mining

BENGALURU, DHNS



The high court has refused to quash proceedings against three persons on charges of extortion.

The petitioners claimed that they are social activists and work as whistleblowers against illegal sand mining.

The petitioners - Sharanappa Reddy, Kiran Patil and Goudappa Patil, all residents of Jewargi taluk in Kalaburagi district, challenged the FIR registered by Jewargi police, based on a complaint by Shreeshail of Bagalkot district.

The complainant said, on June 6, 2025, as instructed by his employer Veeresh, he loaded sand after paying Rs 19,000 as royalty. On June 7, 2025, at about 2.30 am, on reaching Chigarahalli cross, two individuals intercepted the vehicle, demanded royalty and forcibly collected Rs 5,000 from him.

The petitioners challenged the FIR for offences punishable under sections 115(2), 126(2), 308(2), 62, read with Section 3(5) of Bharatiya Nyaha Sanhita.

They said they were agriculturists and social activists involved in environmental protection and were falsely implicated.

According to the petitioners, they used to inform the jurisdictional police about illegal sand mining and transportation by the sand mafia and furnished audio and video recordings in support of their complaints. The police registered a case against them, instead of initiating action against illegal miners, the petitioners said.

On the other hand, the government advocate submitted that the petitioners were rowdy sheeters with criminal antecedents, and so, it was necessary that the investigation be completed without interference.

Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum said the allegations against the petitioners were of a serious nature, involving alleged extortion of money from transporters who had already paid royalty and secured valid permits.

The court also pointed out the petitioners' antecedents and their status as rowdy sheeters.

"In view of the submissions advanced and the material placed on record, this court is of the considered opinion that a thorough investigation is warranted. At this stage, the petitioners' contention that they are whistleblowers who have been falsely implicated cannot be examined. The FIR material prima facie indicates allegations of extortion in the guise of royalty collection, which requires deeper investigation by jurisdictional police. Hence, this court is not inclined to interfere at the investigation stage," Justice Magadum said.

Noticing that the crime was registered on June 7, 2025, and the petitioners contended that they already submitted materials about illegal mining, the court directed the investigating officer to expedite and conclude the investigation at the earliest.

"It is open to the petitioners to approach this court after filing of the charge sheet, if so advised".

155 species of birds spotted at Ankasamudra sanctuary

HAGARIBOMMANAHALLI (VIJAYANAGARA DISTRICT), DHNS

Bird watchers from across Karnataka participate in the bird census exercise carried out at the Ankasamudra bird sanctuary at Hagaribommanahalli in Vijayanagara district on Saturday.

Bird watchers and ornithologists from across the state were part of the enumeration exercise carried out on Saturday at the Ankasamudra Bird Sanctuary – a Ramsar site – in Hagaribommanahalli in Vijayanagara district.

More than 25 ornithologists were part of the exercise conducted by GreenHbH and the Bombay Natural History Society with the guidance of the Forest Department. The participants were divided into several groups for the exercise, which lasted four hours from 6am to 10am. The participants identified specimens of as many as 155 species of birds, of which 40 are migratory birds.

Northern Pintail, Garganey, Northern Shoveler, Fulvus Whistling Duck, Lesser Whistling Duck, Indian Spot Billed Duck, Mallard, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon were among the birds that the participants spotted in huge numbers. The watchers also spotted specimens of Painted Stork, Darter, Open Bill Stork and the Knob-Billed Duck.

Experts said that thousands of birds had left the sanctuary and had made their home near the backwaters. These included specimens of the Black-Headed Ibis, Glossy Ibis, Rosy Starling, Little Egret, Little Cormorant. Forest Science students from Kuvempu University were among those who participated in the exercise.

True spirituality lies in love: VP

VELLORE (TAMIL NADU), PTI: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Saturday said true spirituality lies not merely in ritual worship but in love, compassion, and service to fellow human beings.

Speaking at the golden jubilee celebrations of Sri Sakthi Amma at Sripuram near here, he said protecting the environment itself is a form of divine service.

"Loving and serving society constitutes the highest form of spiritual discipline," Radhakrishnan added, noting Sri Sakthi Amma's commitment to dharma and her guidance that extends beyond spirituality to comprehensive social service.

He highlighted the sanctity and spiritual significance of the Sripuram Golden Temple, reflected in the visits of former Presidents Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Ram Nath Kovind, and, most recently, President Droupadi Murmu in December 2025.

DH
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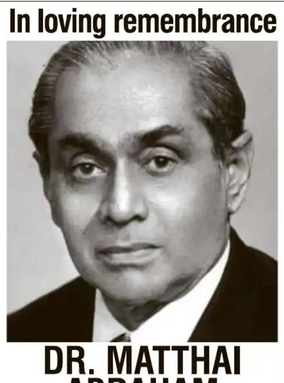


DR. MATTHAI ABRAHAM
8th May 1911 – 4th Jan 1993
His family

Swimming pool at Yadgir district stadium used for RDPR Dept banquet

YADGIR, DHNS

The Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Department has used the swimming pool at the District Stadium in Yadgir for hosting a midnight banquet on Friday.

The banquet was arranged as part of the sports festival being held for the RDPR Department employees.

The swimming pool was decked up with lights, and a motor was placed within to create a small fountain. Balloons were also set afloat on the pool, while tables were set up along its sides.

"The event started around 8 pm and went on till 1 am. Yadgir Zilla Panchayat chief executive officer and deputy commissioner were among the senior officials who attended the banquet. In fact, some officials were also accompanied by their families. A small stage had been erected near the pool, which was used for musical performances," said an RDPR Department employee who was at the banquet.

He told *DH* that decking up the pool and the area around it had taken two days. "A similar event had been organised the last time the department conducted a sports fest as well," he added.

Meanwhile, the RDPR Department's decision to use the swimming pool to host a banquet has come under criticism from athletes.

"Swimming is essential for relief from cramps for athletes. The pool must be open for use every day. But the authorities keep it closed, citing one reason or the other, while keeping it open only for a few days in the summer. The officials have used the pool as if it were their personal property. Action must be initiated against the errant officials," said Lokesh Rathod, an athlete.

The district stadium swimming pool was used to host a midnight banquet as part of the sports festival being held for the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department employees in Yadgir on Friday night.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Dry weather prevailed over Coastal Karnataka, South Interior Karnataka and North Interior Karnataka

Forecast Jan 04: Dry weather likely to prevail over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	29.2	16.8	00
Bidar	28.6	15.8	00
Vijayapura	29.5	18.1	00
Dharwad	28.8	15	00
Haveri	29.4	16.2	00
Kalaburagi	32	19.2	00
Raichur	29.8	18.8	00
COASTAL			
Honnavar	30.9	20.9	00
Karwar	31.6	21.6	00
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	31.1	24.3	00

INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	NA	NA
Bengaluru	27.5	17.4	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	NA	NA	NA
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	29.5	18.5	00
Davangere	30.5	15.2	00
Hassan	29	15.3	00
Mysuru	30	18.4	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	28.6	15.8	00

OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	17.4	8.1	00
Kolkata	24.2	12.8	00
Mumbai	29.8	18.7	00
Chennai	30.3	22.6	00
Pune	29.1	14.2	00
Hyderabad	28.6	19.6	00
Th'puram	32	23.3	00

NEW ALTERNATIVE? Ayurvedic practitioners hail move; IMA raises strong objections

Andhra Pradesh reignites debate on 'Ayurveda surgeries'

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

The Andhra Pradesh government has reignited a longstanding national debate on the scope of practice for Ayurvedic doctors by announcing its plan to allow qualified practitioners to perform surgical procedures independently.

State Health Minister Satya Kumar Yadav, a BJP legislator in N Chandrababu Naidu's TDP-led NDA cabinet, recently approved this move, calling it a step towards integrating traditional Indian systems of medicine with modern healthcare.

The decision applies to Ayurvedic doctors who have completed postgraduate education in surgical disciplines and undergone appropriate clinical training.

Yadav emphasised that the decision aligned with the provisions of the Indian Medicine Central Council (Post Graduate Ayurveda Education) Amendment Regulations, 2020, and guidelines issued by the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM).

The state's Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) Department has been directed to operationalise the measure in consultation with academic and regulatory bodies.

Under the new framework, qualified Ayurvedic practitioners will be permitted to perform 39 Shalyatantra (general surgery) and 19 Shalakyantra (ENT and ophthalmology) procedures.

These cover the treatment of wounds and infectious diseases; removal of damaged tissues following accidents and suturing; treatment of piles and fissures; excision of cysts and benign tumours; muscle and skin grafting therapies; and certain head, throat, and dental operations.

Objections

The Indian Medical Association (IMA), however, has come out strongly against the state's decision, emphasising potential risks to patient safety.

"While the IMA respects all systems of medicine and acknowledges Ayurveda's role in preventive care, performing surgical procedures requires structured and specialised training integral to modern medical education," said IMA National President Dr Dileep Bhanushali.

He argued that surgery demands a comprehensive understanding of anatomy, physiology, pathology, anaesthesia, emergency management, and postoperative critical care — subjects studied in depth during MBBS and MS courses.

Meanwhile, Ayurvedic practitioners across Andhra Pradesh and the country have welcomed the move, calling it a long-overdue recognition of structured surgical training in Ayurveda.

Dr Mamidi Gurumurthy, an Ayurveda practitioner in Vijayawada who has been performing minor surgical procedures, said critics are unfairly dismissing a time-tested science. "It is unfortunate that Ayurveda, which was founded by Sage Sushruta, the father of surgery, is being labelled as quackery," he told *DH*.

"We, too, study anatomy, physiology, pathology, and other branches similar to MBBS students. The BAMS degree is awarded to Bachelors of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery. We are already trained to perform minor operations, and those are precisely the ones being regularised now," he said.

Gurumurthy added that with proper training through integrated courses, such as those offered by institutions like Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER) in Puducherry, Ayurvedic surgeons can safely expand their skill sets to perform even major surgeries.

"In Maharashtra, many Ayurveda doctors perform laparoscopic procedures better than regular allopathy doctors," he claimed. "Ultimately, it depends on training and individual competence. Haven't we seen MBBS doctors who can't administer an injection properly?"

Medical considerations

Gurumurthy, however, acknowledged that many Ayurvedic practitioners rely on allopathy-trained anaesthetists and modern post-operative care, including antibiotics and pain management, due to the limited availability of anaesthesia specialists in AYUSH hospitals.

The Vishwa Ayurveda Parishad (VAP), which represents Ayurvedic doctors nationally, hailed the Andhra Pradesh government's decision as a landmark reform.

"This progressive step recognises the depth and rigour of Ayurvedic surgical education and strengthens India's integrated healthcare system," said Dr Sahithi Seelam, the general secretary of VAP's Andhra Pradesh unit.

"Ayurvedic surgeons undergo extensive academic and clinical training, including exposure to modern techniques. Granting them the rightful scope of practice ensures people have access to safe and ethical healthcare," she told *DH*.

Seelam criticised the IMA's opposition as misplaced. "Instead of creating divisions within the healthcare fraternity, all systems of medicine should work in harmony for the larger benefit of society," she said, assuring that Ayurvedic practitioners remain committed to professional ethics, patient safety, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Some health professionals, while acknowledging the legal provisions, cautioned that effective oversight was critical. "Only those practitioners who are formally trained in recognised universities with appropriate specialist qualifications can safely perform surgeries," said Dr Ambati Naga Radhakrishna, a dental surgeon and faculty member in an Andhra Pradesh medical college.

"Patient safety demands robust regulatory enforcement, which is currently inadequate in identifying and stopping unqualified practitioners," he told *DH*.

He also warned that if individuals without proper training undertook delicate procedures such as eye surgeries or skin grafting, "the risk of blindness, disability, and disfigurement becomes unacceptably high".

Radhakrishna also pointed to widespread lapses in faculty standards and infrastructure across medical and dental colleges, saying that weak enforcement continues to endanger patient safety.

As Andhra Pradesh moves to formalise these permissions, health officials said modalities are still being worked out before issuing final orders.

Medical muddle

Andhra Pradesh announces plan to let qualified Ayurveda practitioners perform surgical procedures independently

They include certain incisions, suturing, grafting, and ENT procedures

IMA OBJECTS STRONGLY, EMPHASISING POTENTIAL RISKS TO PATIENT SAFETY

Ayurvedic practitioners across Andhra Pradesh and the country have welcomed the move

Dismiss IMA concerns, saying they learn the same things taught in MBBS courses

VAP, which represents Ayurvedic doctors nationally, hails AP govt's decision as landmark reform

Contaminated water: 6 dead, 200 in hosp in Indore

INDORE, PTI

Six people have died and more than 200 were hospitalised in an outbreak of vomiting and diarrhoea caused by contaminated drinking water in Madhya Pradesh's Indore city, a senior official said on Saturday.

Indore Mayor Pushyamitra Bhargava had on Friday said that he had received information about the deaths of 10 patients due to the outbreak, while residents of the Bhagirathpura area have claimed that 16 people, including a six-month-old child, have died.

"At present, 203 patients are undergoing treatment in 41 hospitals across the city and six people have died," said Collector Shivam Verma.

Of the patients admitted to hospitals, 34 are in the intensive care units (ICUs), and their treatment is being monitored specially.

The Madhya Pradesh government has shunted out the Indore municipal commissioner and suspended two senior officials in view of the health crisis that emerged in the Bhagirathpura area.

The government, in its status report before the High Court, stated that the outbreak of diarrheal illness due to contaminated water supply is now under effective control, with continuous minute-to-minute monitoring in place to prevent any resurgence.

Cong, BJP workers clash

Around 45 Madhya Pradesh Congress functionaries were detained on Saturday as a 'precautionary measure' after a clash with BJP workers when a fact-finding committee of the opposition party was at Indore's Bhagirathpura area.

The Congress committee under former state minister Sajjan Singh Verma, which includes MLAs Mahesh Parmar and Pratap Grewal, was on its way to meet affected families when BJP workers gathered at the spot carrying black flags and shouted slogans, eyewitnesses said.

Congress workers too replied with slogans denouncing the ruling party, following which the two sides clashed, scuffled with each other and threw slippers, they added.

A police team that arrived at the spot escorted the Congress' fact-finding committee members and workers out of the area and took them to the central jail, they said.

"To maintain law and order in Bhagirathpura, 45 people, including 10 women, were detained as a precautionary measure. They were later released on bail," Deputy Commissioner of Police Rajesh Vyas said.

A man drinks water from a tanker amid a contaminated water crisis in Indore on Saturday. PTI

SC to pronounce order on Umar, others' bail plea tomorrow

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce its judgment on Monday on bail petitions filed by former JNU students Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others in the 2020 Delhi riots larger conspiracy case.

Umar Khalid

A bench of Justices Aravind Kumar and N V Anjaria would render the judgment on Monday, according to the Supreme Court's causelist.

The court had reserved the judgment on December 10.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and Additional Solicitor General S V Raju argued for the Delhi police, and senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Abhishek Singhvi, Siddhartha Dave, Salman Khurshid and Sidharth Luthra appeared for the accused persons.

The accused have been under custody for over five years for offences under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Hindu bizman dies three days after attack in Bangladesh

Fifth Hindu death in a month, says minority faith group leader

DHAKA/NEW DELHI, PTI

A Hindu businessman, who was brutally attacked, hacked, and set on fire in Bangladesh three days ago, died on Saturday, said reports and a minority faith group leader.

This is the fifth death of a Hindu person since December in Bangladesh, and radical groups there are visibly trying to intimidate minority faiths, said Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council spokesman Kajal Debnath.

Khokon Chandra Das (50) was assaulted about 100 km south of Dhaka on Wednesday night while returning home after closing his shop. "Das died this morning after battling for life for three days," said Debnath on Saturday.

Das, who ran a medicine shop and a mobile-banking business, was travelling in an autorickshaw when the attackers intercepted the vehicle and allegedly beat him up, hacked him with sharp weapons, and then poured petrol on his head before setting him on fire.

To save himself, Das jumped into a roadside pond as locals raised an alarm.

The attackers fled the scene, said the police, adding that he was rescued by locals, taken to the Shariatpur Sadar Hospital, and then referred to Dhaka due to the severity of his injuries.

Doctors in Dhaka said Das had multiple injuries across his body, including a serious wound to his abdomen and burnt face, head, and hands.

"This is the fifth death of a Hindu man in one month (December). During the month, we recorded seven attacks on the community," said Debnath.

"The use of petrol or gunpowder to torch someone or a household is an ominous sign... Perhaps we are witnessing the rise of a radical culture," he added.

Earlier Incidents

On December 18, Dipu Chandra Das (25) was lynched by a mob and his body set on fire over alleged blasphemy in Mymensingh city.

On December 23, unidentified men set on fire Qatar expatriate workers Shukh Shil and Anil Shil's home on the outskirts of Chattogram, but the residents managed to come out of the building unharmed.

On December 24, another Hindu man, Amrit Mondal, was lynched over alleged extortion in Rajbari town. Debnath, however, did not elaborate on the other two deaths.

THE TIMELINE

- Khokon Chandra Das (50) was assaulted on Wednesday night while returning home from his shop
- Attackers intercepted the auto he was in, beat him, hacked him with sharp weapons, set him on fire
- Das jumped into a roadside pond, from where locals rescued him and rushed him to a hospital
- He was referred to Dhaka due to severity of injuries

T'gana scraps 2-child norm for local polls

HYDERABAD, DHNS

The Telangana Assembly on Saturday passed the Panchayat Raj (Amendment) Bill, 2026, abolishing the two-child norm that barred individuals with more than two children from contesting local-body elections.

Panchayat Raj Minister Danasari Anasuya Seethakka, who tabled the bill in the Assembly, explained that the 1994 policy aimed to curb population growth amid 1980-90s' challenges like food insecurity, unemployment, and poverty.

After 30 years, the government reviewed its population strategy, noting Telangana's rural fertility rate of 1.7 was below the replacement level of 2.1.

Sustaining this rate could harm future generations, she said, factoring in Panchayat Raj representatives' views.

The amendment to the 2018 Telangana Panchayat Raj Act seeks to boost fertility. The bill secured House approval.

MGNREGA resolution

On Friday, the Assembly also adopted a resolution urging the Central government to preserve the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in its original form.

It denounced the Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Rural) Act, 2025, as being harmful to the rural poor, women, and vulnerable groups by eroding job guarantees.

The resolution highlighted that the MGNREGA delivering at least 100 days of minimum-wage work annually to rural households.

Over 20 years, about 90% of Telangana beneficiaries came from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Backward Classes, with 62% being women.

Dalits, tribals, persons with disabilities, Adivasis, Chenchus, and other poor communities gained the most.

Removing Mahatma Gandhi's name, it argued, dilutes the scheme's Gandhian ethos.

SACRED RELICS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration of the grand international exposition of the sacred Piprahwa Relics, which were discovered in 1898, in New Delhi on Saturday. PTI

Booked for 'anti-national' posts, folk singer records statement

LUCKNOW, PTI: Folk singer Neha Singh Rathore on Saturday reached the Hazratganj police station here for questioning in connection with her comments on the Pahalgam terror attack, officials said.

Rathore was summoned by the investigating officer to record her statement as part of the ongoing probe, police said. She arrived at the police station accompanied by her husband. The development comes after the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court rejected Rathore's anticipatory bail plea in a case related to here comments on social media that were alleged to be baseless, anti-religious and anti-national.

The comments allegedly targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and the BJP in connection with the killing of 26 tourists in Pahalgam. The FIR against Rathore was registered at Hazratganj police station on April 27.

TMC MP Mausam Noor returns to Cong

NEW DELHI, DHNS: With just months left for the West Bengal Assembly elections, Trinamool Congress (TMC) Rajya Sabha member Mausam Noor on Saturday returned to the Congress, amid indications that she might fight the polls from a seat in the family borough of Malda.

The 46-year-old leader, whose Rajya Sabha term ends this April, had been a two-term Lok Sabha member from the Congress between 2009 and 2019 before she joined the TMC, upset over her then party not managing to tie up with the Mamata Banerjee-led outfit for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

She lost on a TMC ticket in 2019; the party sent her to the Rajya Sabha in 2020.

Mausam Noor with AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh on Saturday. PTI

Noor, who was Trinamool's Malda district president, belongs to the family of late ABA Ghani Khan Choudhury, an influential Congress figure in Malda, and her cousin Isha Khan Choudhury is the Malda Dakshin MP.

"Our family decided we need to work together to take forward ABA Ghani Khan Choudhury's legacy in Congress. I will try my best to strengthen the Congress in Bengal," Noor told reporters after joining the party in the presence of general secretaries Jairam Ramesh and Ghulam Ahmed Mir and West Bengal Congress president Subhankar Sarkar.

To queries on whether she would contest the West Bengal Assembly elections, she said she had not joined the Congress with any conditions.

She recalled that she was given a lot of responsibilities, "sometimes too many", when she was in Congress.

Transport Canada warns AI on drinking rules after pilot's arrest

VANCOUVER, AP: An Air India pilot was arrested at Vancouver International Airport last week as he was preparing for a flight, with Canada's transportation agency warning the airline that it faced loss of its flight authorisations if it did not comply with rules about alcohol consumption.

Transport Canada said in a statement Friday that the incident took place on December 23, and it would engage with Air India and Indian aviation authorities to ensure "appropriate followup actions" were taken.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said the arrest occurred after a "report of concern" involving an airline crew member.

Police said an investigation is ongoing and no further information would be released.

A spokeswoman for the airport said the pilot had been preparing for Air India's scheduled daily flight from Vancouver to Delhi, which was delayed for several hours but later departed safely.

Transport Canada said in its statement that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation of India had primary responsibility for regulatory oversight of Air India.

Kerala: Ruling-front MLA jailed in decades-old evidence-tampering case

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

Former minister and sitting MLA of the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) in Kerala, Antony Raju, has been sentenced to three years in prison for tampering with evidence in an over-three-decade-old drug-smuggling case involving an Australian national.

Janadhipathya Kerala Congress leader Antony Raju, who is an MLA from the Thiruvananthapuram constituency, was sentenced by the Nedumangad judicial first class magistrate court on Saturday. The court granted him a one-month bail for filing appeals.

The Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) in the Opposition launched a protest against the government over the issue.

The prosecution argued that Raju, a lawyer by profession, tampered with the evidence in a case involving an Australian national in April 1990. The Australian was held at the Thiruvananthapuram international airport after he tried to smuggle drugs hidden in his undergarments.

Raju, who was then serving as a junior lawyer with the Australian's lawyer, was accused of removing the undergarment from the court with the help of court staff, reducing its size, and returning it.

A lower court convicted the Australian national, but a higher court exonerated him after his lawyers argued that the undergarment did not suit the accused.

The police later received information regarding the evidence tampering and booked Raju and court staffer Jose, who was accused of helping him. Jose was also convicted and sentenced in the case.

Priyanka to head screening panel for Assam election

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Initiating the process to select candidates for poll-bound states, Congress on Saturday announced setting up of screening committees to choose candidates, with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra tasked to head the panel for Assam, a first for the Gandhi scion.

Priyanka Gandhi

From Karnataka, BK Hariprasad will head the panel for West Bengal, while senior MPs Syed Naseer Hussain will be part of the Screening Committee for Kerala and GC Chandrashekhar for the panel for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

TN, Puducherry, Kerala, Assam and West Bengal are set to go to Assembly elections in April-May this year.

The highlight of the announcement is the assignment for Priyanka, a party general secretary, who has not been assigned any specific role. This is the first time the Wayanad MP will be heading a screening committee that will shortlist candidates to enable the central election committee to choose from.

Senior MPs Saptagiri Ulaka, Imran Masood and Sirivella Prasad are the other members in the Screening Committee for Assam, where the Congress hopes to return to power after a decade.

It also indicates a more active role for Priyanka in the organisation, amid a section arguing that she should head the Election Management Department, which is yet to be set up.

She was appointed Uttar Pradesh incharge, but resigned after the Congress' poor electoral show in the state. She was retained as a General Secretary without any responsibility.

However, a section in the party is arguing for a larger role for Priyanka in the organisation.

Kerala is another state where the party hopes to return to power by ousting the CPM-led Left Democratic Front. As she is an MP from the state, the leadership chose to assign her to Assam.

Senior leader Madhusudan will head the panel for Kerala.

Former Chhattisgarh deputy chief minister TS Singhdeo will head the screening committee for Tamil Nadu and Puducherry.

Hariprasad will head the Bengal screening committee.

PLGA fortress collapses as top Maoist commander surrenders

Badse Sukka lays down arms with 19 cadre in Telangana

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

In a major setback to the CPI (Maoist), its last remaining fortress nearly collapsed after People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) Battalion Commander Badse Sukka, alias Deva, surrendered before the Telangana Police on Saturday, along with 19 underground cadre.

Deva surrendered with a Colt rifle and a cache of arms. Operating across Sukma, Dantewada, and Bijapur districts in Chhattisgarh, the PLGA — the armed wing of the banned CPI (Maoist), once commanded by Maoist leader Madvi Hidma —was known for its firepower and discipline, with 80% of its fighters armed with automatic or semi-automatic rifles, AK-series weapons, self-loading rifles, and light machine guns.

Badse Sukka (49) was the second-most important tribal leader in the party. A contemporary of Hidma, who was recently killed in an encounter in Andhra Pradesh, Sukka joined the CPI(ML) PWG in 2003, influenced by their friendship. Hidma and Deva come from the same village: Puvvarthi.

Sukka mastered military strategies, explosives procurement, firearm manufacturing, and IEDs under Hidma. When Hidma was promoted and left the PLGA Battalion in November 2023, he appointed Deva his successor and commander. A ruthless strategist, Sukka orchestrated ambushes like the one in Jheram Ghati, which killed Chhattisgarh minister Mahendra Karma and other Congress leaders.

This surrender signals the death knell for the PLGA and the Telangana State Committee.

Surrendered cadres handed over PLGA arms linked to Hidma and Deva. The haul included 48 weapons—two light machine guns, one US-made Colt rifle, one Israeli Tavor rifle, eight AK-47s, 10 INSAS rifles, eight SLRs, four bundle grenade launchers, 11 single-shot weapons, two grenades, one air gun, and 2,206 rounds of ammunition.

"In 2024, heavy police suppression in South Bastar forced Devoji, Hidma, Chandranna, Damodar, and other formations to shift to Karreguttalu Hill (KGH). Deva managed KGH security and logistics, reorganising PLGA units to shield them from special forces raids involving thousands of personnel. Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, and the NIA had announced a Rs 75-lakh reward on him," said a senior Telangana anti-Naxal officer.

T'gana committee

Meanwhile, the Telangana State Committee teeters on collapse, with only one member left after Kankanala Raji Reddy, alias Venkatesh, surrendered on Saturday. Joining CPI (ML) PW in April 1997, Reddy became the District Committee Member in 2010 and State Committee Member in December 2019.

He oversaw the erstwhile Warangal and Karimnagar districts, key Maoist hubs in north Telangana, building courier networks, activating front organisations, and establishing guerrilla bases and logistics dumps at Karreguttalu. Post-surrender, only TSC Secretary Damodhar remains.

"For today's surrender of 20 underground Maoist cadres with weapons, Rs 1.81 crore in eligible rewards will be disbursed via demand drafts or cheques under state and Central rehabilitation policies after documentation and bank account setup. Each has received Rs 25,000 interim relief, with further benefits forthcoming. The Telangana Police assures all entitled support for dignified reintegration," said Telangana DGP B Shivadhaar Reddy.

Currently, only 17 active underground cadres from Telangana remain across formations nationwide; 33 others on the list have reportedly quit the CPI (Maoist).

Red Retreat

PLGA Commander Badse Sukka, along with 19 others, surrendered on Saturday

Sukka considered 2nd most important tribal leader of party

A contemporary of Madvi Hidma, Sukka joined CPI(ML) PWG in 2003

The Maoists who surrendered on Saturday.

When Hidma left PLGA, he succeeded as commander

Believed to have orchestrated ambushes like Jheram Ghati

Delays push bullet train cost to Rs 1.98 lakh cr

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The cost of construction of the ambitious Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project is likely to touch Rs 1.98 lakh crore as against the initial estimation of Rs 1.08 lakh crore in 2016 due to delay in execution, said a top railway official.

Chairman Railway Board Satish Kumar at Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation briefing here said that due to a delay for various reasons, including land acquisition, the cost of construction has gone up.

Earlier, the ministry said Rs 85,801 crore were spent till November, and made 56.6% physical work progress.

The foundation stone for the project was laid in 2017, and the entire project was supposed to be completed in December 2023. However, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw earlier this week announced that the first stretch between Surat and Bilimora would be operational on August 15, 2027.

The entire 508 km-long Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Corridor will be completed by the end of 2029.

Delay is mainly due to slow pace in land acquisition, finalisation of rolling stocks and getting forest and environment clearances.

'Bad precedent': Experts on US strikes on Venezuela

NEW DELHI, PTI

The US strike on Venezuela, and the capture of President Nicolas Maduro, is "unbelievable" and will set a "bad precedent", as other powers may try to undertake similar actions in future, citing the American move, Indian experts on strategic affairs said on Saturday.

They also termed it a "very dangerous" and "aggressive step" taken by the Donald Trump administration.

The US action, which hit global headlines, followed a long period of tension between it and the Maduro administration, which has been facing criticism from many of its own citizens over multiple allegations.

Ex-diplomat and strategic affairs expert Rajiv Dogra said, "Quite frankly, this is unbelievable. I mean, it has still not sunk in, because, in a way, this is unprecedented in recent times."

It may have happened in previous centuries, when someone would "invade countries", capture leaders of those countries or kill them, but in recent times, "we've not heard of any country acting with such little regard for law, custom or reason", Dogra said.

"Trump has broken all the traditions, all the sanctities of sovereignty by indulging in such acts," Dogra alleged.

The ex-diplomat argued that whether Maduro was liked by the people of Venezuela was "a different thing", which was "for Venezuelans to decide".

But for Trump to order his forces to lift Maduro from Venezuela stands to no reason at all, Dogra said.

India's former ambassador to Venezuela, Deepak Bhojwani, said Maduro "has been in the crosshairs of the US administration", and the US found it very difficult to "dislodge" him because he controls the country's military and "assumed a kind of dictatorial position".

Bhojwani, appointed India's envoy to Venezuela in 2003, said there have been "very, very credible accusations against him that he has not followed democratic practices".

GLOBAL MISADVENTURE?

- US action follows long period of tension between US and the Maduro administration
- Ex-diplomat says never heard of any country 'acting with such little regard for law, custom, or reason' in recent times
- India's ex-envoy to Venezuela, Deepak Bhojwani, notes Maduro 'has been on crosshairs of the US administration'

UGC, HP govt order probes into 'ragging-linked death'

CM promises strict action; accused teacher suspended

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has formed a five-member panel to look into the tragic death of a 19-year-old Dalit student in a Dharamshala college. She had accused three students of ragging and a professor of sexual harassment.

The UGC said the fact-finding committee, headed by Professor Raj Kumar Mittal of the Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, will examine the circumstances surrounding the incident and the college's conduct.

Meanwhile, the Himachal Pradesh government said it, too, had set up an inquiry committee to cover all aspects, including the alleged sexual harassment and caste-related abuse in college, with Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu promising strict action.

The state government also suspended the assistant professor, hours after the CM Sukhu's promise.

The student of the Government Degree College in Dharamshala died in a Ludhiana hospital.

A video of the visibly sick student levelling allegations against the professor in the hospital has been making the rounds on social media.

The UGC, in a statement, said that it has taken "serious cognisance" of the matter.

"The UGC Anti-Ragging Helpline registered a suo-motu complaint based on media reports alleging ragging leading to suicide, while the college authorities have stated that the case is a death and not a suicide," it said

"A police enquiry is underway, and UGC has already constituted a Fact-Finding Committee to examine the incident. UGC assures that culprits will not be spared and that stringent action will follow," the statement said.

(*With PTI inputs*)

CPM members protest the alleged sexual harassment and ragging of a Dalit girl in Dharamshala on Saturday. PTI

Empathy distinguishes just society from unjust one: CJI

PATNA, PTI: Chief Justice of India Surya Kant on Saturday asserted that "empathy" in the legal system distinguished "a just society from an unjust one", and underscored the need to "bend the arc of justice towards the communities that need it the most".

CJI Surya Kant

The CJI made the remarks while addressing a convocation ceremony at the Chanakya National Law University in Patna, where he reminded young lawyers that "intensity" in pursuit of their careers must not lead to "erasure" of finer sensibilities.

"Many young lawyers believe that success requires total surrender to work, to guidelines and to expectations, and for a while, intensity is inevitable, but it must not become erasure. If the law occupies every corner of your life, you risk losing the very empathy and judgment that justice requires," the CJI said.

This very empathy in our legal system is what distinguishes a just society from an unjust one, he observed.

"As you leave this university, remember that the law is not just for those who can afford it, but for anyone who is in dire need of it. You carry a solemn duty to use your skills for people's benefit. As I often say, the question is not whether you have learnt the law, it is whether you are ready to reshape it, to bend it, also to bend the arc of justice towards the communities that need it the most," the CJI said.

The CJI wound up his two-day visit of the Bihar capital with the address to the convocation ceremony.

Seat-sharing talks with DMK progressing: Cong

E T B SIVAPRIYAN
CHENNAI, DHNS

Ending all speculation, the Congress on Saturday reaffirmed its alliance with Tamil Nadu's ruling DMK for the 2026 Assembly polls, saying the two parties had begun negotiations for the electoral arrangement.

While rejecting reports that the party was looking for an alliance with actor Vijay's TVK, the Congress' TN incharge Girish Chodankar reiterated that his party and the DMK have been longstanding and reliable partners and that there was no change in that relationship.

Chodankar said the party was waiting for the DMK to invite the five-member committee constituted to hold seat-sharing talks for further negotiations, and expressed the hope that the matter would be "closed" at the earliest.

The clarification comes amid intense speculation that the party was inclined towards an alliance with TVK.

Social media posts by a few leaders that indirectly criticised the DMK government and speeches by state-level functionaries in support of actor Vijay led to a visible strain in the relationship.

"Has anybody told you that we are not going to be in an alliance with the DMK? Exactly a month ago, we met the CM, and we are waiting for them (their response)," he said.

To a question on the demand for power-sharing, Chodankar evaded a direct reply, asking: "Tell me which political party doesn't want power. We should then name ourselves NGOs."

However, when pressed on whether the Congress had made demands from the DMK, Chodankar refused to answer the question directly.

The Congress and the DMK have fought every election together since 2004, except the 2014 Lok Sabha polls.

TN chief minister unveils assured pension scheme for govt employees

CHENNAI, DHNS: Fulfilling a two-decade-old demand of government employees and teachers, a key vote bank, in an election year, the DMK dispensation on Saturday unveiled the Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme (TAPS), which will provide benefits equivalent to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), discontinued in 2003.

Doing a fine balancing act, given the state's financial constraints, the new scheme assures 50% of the last drawn salary by a government employee as pension, retains the contributory component, promises Dearness Allowance (DA) hike every six months, and grants gratuity up to Rs 25 lakh.

The announcement comes at a time when the Tamil Nadu government is under criticism from several quarters over its increasing debt, which currently stands at Rs 9.21 lakh crore. The government formulated the new scheme after months of study by senior bureaucrats, who submitted a report last week.

ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು– 577101

(Autonomous Medical Institution, Government of Karnatakaka)

Phone: 08262-295.347 E-Mail Address: directorcims2020@gmail.com

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿ)

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಸಿಮ್ಸ್/ಸರಬ/ಟೆಂಡರ್/ಪತ್ರಿಕಾಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ/01/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ : 02–01–2026

ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ಅರಳಗುಪ್ಪೆ ಮಲ್ಲೇಗೌಡ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಆಸ್ಪತ್ರೆಯ ಕೀಲು ಮತ್ತು ಮೂಳೆ ರೋಗ ಹಾಗೂ ಸರ್ಜರಿ ವಿಭಾಗಗಳಿಗೆ ಅವಶ್ಯವಿರುವ ವಿವಿಧ ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ಉಪಕರಣಗಳನ್ನು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮಾಡಲು ಉತ್ಪಾದಕರವರಿಂದ/ ನೊಂದಾಯಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟ ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಮಾರಾಟಗಾರರಿಂದ ದ್ವಿ–ಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಮತ್ತಿತ್ತರ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಜಿಒಕೆ ಇ ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಸಿಸ್ಟಮ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ವೆಬ್ ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ವೀಕ್ಷಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಸಂ	ವಿವರಗಳು	ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ	ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಕೆ ಪ್ರಾರಂಭ ದಿನಾಂಕ	ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಕೆ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ
01.	ಸರ್ಜರಿ ವಿಭಾಗಕ್ಕೆ Endoscopy(Video endoscopy system with medical grade monitorನ್ನು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಪಡೆಯುವಕುರಿತು.	60.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು (ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ರೂ.1,20,000/–)	03.01.2026	12.01.2026
02.	ಅಥೋಪೆಡಿಕ್ಸ್ ವಿಭಾಗಕ್ಕೆ 5kw C arm Machine FPD Machine ನ್ನು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಪಡೆಯುವಕುರಿತು– ಕಾಲ್–2	60.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು (ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ ರೂ.1,20,000/–)	03.01.2026	12.01.2026

ಸಹಿ/– ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು,
ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ, ಚಿಕ್ಕಮಗಳೂರು

BELAGAVI INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES

(Autonomous Medical Institution)
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Road, Belagavi - 590001.
E-Mail: belgaum.bims@gmail.com

No. BIMS/A.H.S/CR-03/2025-26 Date: 03-01-2026

NOTIFICATION

The Director Belagavi Institute of Medical Sciences Belagavi The Invitation for B.Sc Allied Health FOR BIMS Belagavi.

Sl. No.	INVITES APPLICATION FOR B.SC ALLIED VACANT HEALTH SCIENCE COURSE SEAT FOR BIMS BELAGAVI	VACANT SEATS
1	B.SC. ANAESTHESIA AND OPARATION THRETRE TECHNOLOGY	20
2	B.SC MEDICAL IMAGAING TECHINOLOGY	10
3	B.SC MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGY	20
4	B.SC. RENAL DIALYSIS TECHONOLOGY	10
5	B.SC. CARDIAC CARE TECHNOLOGY	10
6	B.SC RESPIRATORY CARE TECHNOLOGY	10
7	B.SC EMERGENCY & TRUAMA CARE TECHOLOGY	10

Sd/- Director
Belagavi Institute of Medical Sciences
Belagavi.

DIPR/Belagavi/1577/Adverto/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(Public Works Department)
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Public Works Department, Division: Yadgir.
GSTIN:29BLR002252F1DR

No.EE/PWD/Divn/YDG/TS-2/e-Tender/2025-26/ 2388, Dated:02.01.2026

Short Term e-Tender Notification

1) Details of works: On behalf of Governor of Karnataka as per KTPP Amendment 1999-2000 Act 2000 Standard Bid Document KW-4 Karnataka Public Works Department invited item Rate Tender under KPPP Portal in Two Cover System from Eligible Agency/Contractors for following works Under KKRDB (Plan) for the year 2025-26 Under Yadgir Taluka-(1)30321, (2)30325 and Shahapur Taluka-(1)30336 Totally 3 (Three) works Tender Called 2) Amount Put to Tender: Miminimum Rs 316.00 Lakhs and Maximum Rs.990.00 Lakhs 3) Contractor Eligible Details: Civil Class-II & Above 4) Tender Procesing Fee and EMD Details :Tender Fee, EMD & Period as per kppp portal, 5) Last Date & Time for Tender Pre-Bid Meeting: 09.01.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) 6) Last Date & Time for Tender queries/Clarification: 12.01.2026 (Upto 17.30 hrs) 7) Last Date & Time for Reciept of the tender in e-KPPP portal: 14.01.2026 (Upto 16.00 hrs) 8) Date & Time of Opening of the Tender/Technical Bid: 16.01.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) 9) Date & Time of Opening of the Financial Bid: 19.01.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) 10) For More Details Contact: Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division: Yadgir. 11) Website Address: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

NOTE:Any Corrections / Changes will be updated in the kppp Portal only

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
PWD Division, Yadgir.

DIP/YDG/450/KSMC&A/2025-26

THE HUTTI GOLD MINES COMPANY LIMITED

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Hutti - 584 115, Raichur Dist., Karnataka State. Phone: 08537-276339/275463
e-Mail: material276339@gmail.com website: www.huttigold.karnataka.gov.in

TENDER NOTIFICATION NO. 30/25-26 Dt: 04.01.2026
(Through KPP Portal only)

Tender is invited by "The Senior Manager (Materials)" for the following Tenders as detailed below.

Sl. No.	Description	EMD in Rs.
1	Sale of Bullion (Dore Bars). **HGML/2025-26/SE0077**	15,00,000/-
2	Providing manpower for annual colony maintenance. **HGML/2025-26/SE0071**	4,78,000/-
3	Supply, Laying, Testing and Commissioning of Impervious Layer. **HGML/2025-26/SE0076**	5,80,000/-

Calendar of Events: **(1)** Pre-Bid Meetings (Zoom): **12.01.2026 at 10.00 AM for Sl.No.1, 10.30 AM for Sl.No.2 & 11.00 AM for Sl.No.3.**
(2) Last date for receipt of tender: **30.01.2026 at 4.00 PM.**
(3) Opening of Technical Bid on: **02.02.2026 at 10.00 AM.**
For further details interested bidders are advised to log on to website **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the office of undersigned during working hours. For participating in the above tender bidder needs to be registered in KPP Portal.

Sd/- Senior Manager (Materials)

LEADING GOLD PRODUCER IN INDIA

China is deeply shocked and strongly condemns the use of force by the US against a sovereign country and the use of force against the president of a country. China firmly opposes such hegemonic behaviour by the US.
Chinese foreign ministry

want to establish the facts first. I want to speak to President Trump. I want to speak to allies. I can be absolutely clear that we were not involved ... and I always say and believe we should all uphold international law.
Keir Starmer, UK prime minister

The US committed an act of armed aggression against Venezuela. This is deeply concerning and condemnable. The pretexts used to justify such actions are unfounded. Ideological animosity has prevailed over business.
Russian foreign ministry

The bombings on Venezuelan territory and the capture of its president cross an unacceptable line. These acts represent a grave affront to Venezuela's sovereignty...it sets dangerous precedent.
Lula Da Dilva, Brazilian president

Following very closely the situation in Venezuela. We stand by the people of Venezuela and support a peaceful and democratic transition. Any solution must respect international law.
Ursula von der Leyen , European Commission president

COLLAPSE OF POWER : His capture ends an era marked by repression, economic collapse and global isolation

Maduro never escaped his predecessor's shadow

Nicolas Maduro
Age: 63
- **Position:** President of Venezuela (2013–2026)
- **Background:** Former bus driver; union leader; successor to Hugo Chávez
- **Rule marked by:** Economic collapse, sanctions, mass emigration and repression
- **Close ally of China and Russia;** Maduro has long portrayed the US as a primary adversary
- **Indicted on drug charges;** later 'arrested' by US forces on January 3, 2026

María Corina Machado
Age: 58
- **Position:** Opposition leader; founder of Vente Venezuela
- **Background:** Engineer turned politician; long-time critic of Chavismo (political idealogy of Hugo Chavez
- Known for hardline stance against Nicolás Maduro; anti-corruption and pro-democracy advocacy
- The 2025 Nobel Peace Prize winner is barred from holding public office, but remains the symbolic leader of the opposition and a key mobilising force against the Maduro regime

CARACAS (VENEZUELA), AP/PTI

Nicolás Maduro's fall marked the culmination of months of intensified US pressure on multiple fronts.

In the final months of his presidency, Maduro fuelled speculation that the US government was planning to attack or invade Venezuela to end the self-proclaimed socialist revolution launched by his late mentor and predecessor, Hugo Chávez, in 1999.

Like Chávez, Maduro cast the United States as Venezuela's greatest threat, railing against both Democratic and Republican administrations for efforts to restore democratic norms. Maduro's political career began about four decades ago. In 1986, he travelled to Cuba for a year of ideological instruction, his only formal education after high school.

After returning to Venezuela, he worked as a bus driver for the Caracas subway system, where he quickly rose as a union leader. During the 1990s, Venezuela's intelligence agencies identified him as a leftist radical with close ties to the Cuban government.

Maduro later left his job and joined the political movement organised by Chávez, who had received a presidential pardon in 1994 after leading a failed and bloody military coup two years earlier.

Once Chávez took office, the former youth baseball player climbed steadily through the ruling party. He spent six years as a lawmaker before becoming president of the National Assembly, followed by six years as foreign minister and a brief stint as vice president. Appointed the political heir to Chávez Chávez used his final address to the nation before his death in 2013 to anoint Maduro as his successor, urging supporters to vote for the then foreign minister should he die.

The decision surprised both supporters and critics. But Chávez's electoral dominance delivered Maduro a razor-thin victory later that year, securing his first six-year term, though he never commanded the personal loyalty Chávez enjoyed.

Maduro married Flores, his partner of nearly two decades, in July 2013 shortly after becoming president. He referred to her as the "first combatant" rather than first lady and relied on her as a close adviser.

Maduro's presidency was defined by a deepening social, political and economic crisis that pushed millions into poverty, drove more than 7.7 million Venezuelans to migrate and saw thousands of real or perceived opponents imprisoned. Rights groups documented widespread torture, some allegedly ordered by Maduro. He reinforced repression by purging state institutions of dissenters.

The crisis erupted during his first year in office. The political opposition, including now Nobel Peace Prize laureate María Corina Machado, called for street protests in Caracas and other cities. Security forces crushed the demonstrations, which left 43 people dead and dozens arrested. In 2015, Maduro's United Socialist Party of Venezuela lost control of the National Assembly for the first time in 16 years. He responded by neutralising the opposition-led legislature through the creation of a pro-government Constituent Assembly in 2017, triggering months of protests violently suppressed by security forces and the military.

More than 100 people were killed, thousands injured and hundreds detained. The International Criminal Court opened an investigation into alleged crimes against humanity by Maduro and senior officials, an inquiry that remained ongoing in 2025. In 2018, Maduro survived an assassination attempt.

Bedevilled by economic collapse Maduro failed to halt Venezuela's economic free fall. Hyperinflation and acute shortages of food and medicines spread nationwide. Entire families went hungry and began migrating on foot to neighbouring countries. Those who stayed queued for hours to buy basic staples such as rice and beans. Street fights erupted over flour. Ruling party loyalists moved the December 2018 presidential election to May and barred key opposition parties. Some politicians were jailed; others fled into exile. Maduro ran virtually unopposed and was declared the winner.

A firefighter walks past a destroyed anti-aircraft unit at La Carlota military air base in Caracas, Venezuela, on Saturday. REUTERS

US Interventions in Latin America

1 1954 Guatemala
CIA-backed coup ousts President Jacobo Árbenz after land reforms threatened US business interests.

2 1961 Cuba
US-trained exiles fail to overthrow Fidel Castro in the Bay of Pigs invasion.

3 1965 Dominican Republic
US troops intervene to block the return of leftist president Juan Bosch.

4 1970s Support for dictatorships
- Washington backs military regimes across the region, including **Chile** under Pinochet and Argentina's junta.
- Thousands of dissidents disappear under Operation Condor.

5 1980s Central America wars
US funds **Nicaragua's** Contra rebels and backs El Salvador's government in brutal civil wars, causing tens of thousands of deaths.

6 1983 Grenada
US invades after a coup, citing threats to American citizens; action condemned by the UN.

7 1989 Panama
US forces overthrow Manuel Noriega, a former US ally, in Operation "Just Cause."

Trump did not seek Congressional authorisation

WASHINGTON, NYT NEWS SERVICE: While President Donald Trump crowed Saturday about the capture of President Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela by US authorities, Democrats in Congress sounded alarms about the legality of the action and raised questions about recent briefings in which administration officials assured them that they were not seeking regime change in the nation.

Sen Andy Kim, D-N.J., accused Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth of having "blatantly" lied to Congress when they said the administration's objective in Venezuela was not about toppling Maduro. He called the move to oust the Venezuelan leader "disastrous," arguing that it would further isolate the US on the global stage.

Maduro's inner circle appears to survive

SÃO PAULO, NYT NEWS SERVICE: The US captured Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores. But Maduro's inner circle appeared to have survived the US strikes on the country, though it was not immediately clear who was in power.

Venezuelan Vice President Delcy Rodríguez, who is next in the presidential line of succession, figured among the Venezuelan officials issuing pronouncements or making public appearances after US strikes on targets in the country.

While reports circulated that Rodríguez was in Russia at the time of the attacks, Rodríguez is in Caracas, according to three people close to her. Russian state media also denied reports that she was in Moscow.

Other top Maduro allies who appeared to survive the attacks included Vladimir Padrino López, the defense minister and Venezuela's top ranking military officer; and Diosdado Cabello, the interior minister and one of Maduro's top enforcers. The survival of these officials suggests that Venezuela's government remains functioning.

Global leftist leaders denounce American attack on Venezuela

BLOOMBERG: Global leftist leaders took to social media early Saturday to condemn a US attack carried out in Venezuela that led to the capture of Nicolas Maduro in Caracas.

Brazil, Russia, Colombia, Mexico and Cuba all rejected the US military action in the South American nation. Russia said it prompted "deep concern and condemnation," according to a statement from the Foreign Ministry. Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said the US crossed an unacceptable line.

"The action evokes the worst episodes of interference in the politics of Latin America and the Caribbean and threatens to undermine the region's status as a zone of peace," the Brazilian president wrote on X.

Colombian President Gustavo Petro said he was seeking a meeting of the United Nations Security Council—a call supported by Brazil, Russia and Mexico—and rejected "the aggression against the sovereignty of Venezuela and of Latin America."

Cuba's leader Miguel Diaz-Canel called for an "urgent" response from the international community against what he described as a "criminal attack."

The US captured Nicolas Maduro and flew him out of Venezuela following a series of airstrikes. The first explosions in the capital were heard around 2 a.m. local time, and aircraft could be seen and heard overhead for hours, according to residents. Multiple blasts were centered around the Fuerte Tiuna military base in Caracas.

President Donald Trump is scheduled to hold a press conference at 11 a.m. at Mar-a-Lago, his estate in Palm Beach, Florida. ny change in government in Venezuela is likely to have a significant impact across the region. Countries south of Venezuela have seen a massive inflow of migrants fleeing Maduro's regime, with several South American leaders seeking ways to manage border crossings.

Tarique Rahman emerges as B'desh's likely next power broker

BNP leader's homecoming redraws political map

REUTERS/NYT NEWS SERVICE

When Tarique Rahman stepped barefoot onto Bangladeshi soil after nearly 17 years in exile, scooping up a handful of earth in a symbolic homecoming, it marked more than the return of a long-absent political leader. It signalled a shift in Bangladesh's political centre of gravity ahead of February's parliamentary elections, with Rahman emerging as the strongest contender to lead the country after years of political turmoil.

Hundreds of thousands of supporters lined the roads from Dhaka's airport to the capital, turning Rahman's arrival into a show of strength for the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), which he has led as acting chairman from London since 2018.

The scale of the mobilisation underscored the party's renewed confidence—and its belief that Rahman's physical presence at home could translate popular sympathy into electoral momentum.

At 60, Rahman returns to a country profoundly altered since he left in 2008 amid corruption cases and political pressure. The legal barriers that once kept him away fell after the ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a student-led uprising last year and the subsequent overturning of convictions against him. With Hasina now in exile in India and her Awami League barred from contesting the February 12 vote, Bangladesh's long-running rivalry between two political dynasties has abruptly ended, leaving a vacuum Rahman is now positioned to fill. That vacuum is being overseen by an interim government led by Muhammad Yunus, tasked with guiding a fragile transition after nearly two years of unrest. Although authorities have pledged a free and peaceful election, sporadic violence, attacks on media outlets, rising religious intolerance and a weakened police force have raised concerns about stability. Against this backdrop, Rahman's return has taken on outsized importance—both as a potential anchor of political order and as a test of whether the BNP can project restraint alongside momentum.

In his first address to supporters, Rahman struck a conciliatory tone. Opening with the words "Beloved Bangladesh," he pledged to build an inclusive nation belonging to "people of the hills and the plains, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Christians." Emphasising safety, peace and coexistence, he appeared keenly aware of fears that extremist forces could exploit the current instability, particularly as minorities—especially Hindus—have faced a series of attacks since the interim government assumed power.

For now, Rahman's return has reshaped the political conversation. Whether he can convert popular enthusiasm into a stabilising mandate will determine not only the outcome of February's election but the direction of Bangladesh's next political era.

Pakistan backs China's claim of playing a role in defusing tension

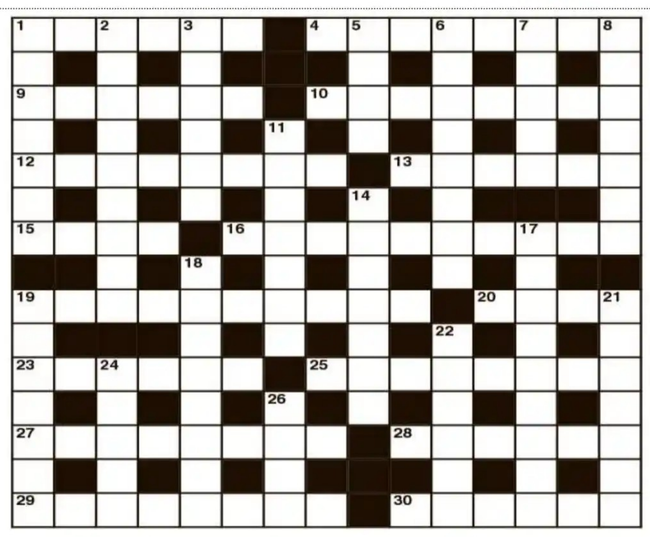
ISLAMABAD, PTI: Pakistan has backed China's claim that Beijing played a role in defusing tension with India during Operation Sindoor, calling it "diplomacy for peace" that was part of international efforts.

Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said that the leadership of China was in constant touch with the leadership of Pakistan, and "had made certain contacts with the Indian leadership as well in those three-four days from May 6 to 10th and maybe prior to that and after that."

"So, I'm sure that the Chinese characterisation of mediation is correct," he said on Thursday while replying to a question about Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's claim that India-Pak tensions were among the list of hotspot issues "mediated" by China in 2025.

India has maintained that the conflict with Pakistan in May last year was resolved through direct talks between the Director Generals of Military Operations of both countries' armies. India has also been consistently maintaining that there is no place for any third-party intervention.

◆ SUNDAY CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 2661 ◆



ACROSS
1 Steal cattle, horses etc. (6)
4 Take responsibility (8)
9 Scarcity (6)
10 Throw doubt upon (8)
12 Loss of nerve (4,4)
13 City HQ of Red Cross (6)
15 Shakespearean king (4)
16 Completely unfamiliar subject (6,4)
19 Accept without considering (4,2,4)
20 Prevent (4)
23 Covered walk with shops (6)
25 Very much in fashion (3,3,2)
27 Be successful in career (2,6)
28 Thinly scattered (6)
29 Impressive (8)
30 Free of charge (6)

DOWN
1 Far-reaching (7)
2 Light social conversation (5,4)
3 Excuse for punishment (3,3)
5 Pull with effort (4)
6 Shaky (8)
7 Motivation and energy (5)
8 To pillage (7)
11 State explicitly (7)
14 As a rule (7)
17 In succession (2,3,4)
18 Easygoing (4,4)
19 Anti-riot weapon (4,3)
21 Series of changes (7)
22 Dazed state (6)
24 Prank (5)
26 Signify (4)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 4021

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 9, Level best 10, Whistler 12, Nail 13, W-all-et 14, P-O-inter 15, He-si-ta-tes 17, Men-agerie 18, Se-cur-ed 20, Turn on 21, Line 24, Straight 26, Off-break 28, A-shy 29, R-idd-L-e 31, Put-down 34, High-light 36, Last straw 38, Run down 39, Stumps 40, Plan(e) 41, Nepal-ese 42, Cor-tison-e.
DOWN: 1, Clinches 2, A-void-s 3, Departed 4, Stalls 5, Two-timer 6, Ripping off 7, St-R-ingy 8, Setter 11, Orde-red 16, Th-re-at 19, Catch 20, Tot (rev) 22, I-dah-O 23, G-rat-Is 25, Going under 26, One (won) 27, Was-hers 30, De-tested 31, Pa's-sport 32, No wonder 33, Also ran 35, Gan-der (rev) 36, L-a-unch 37, Roll-on.

EASY
ACROSS: 9, Laughable 10, Moreover 12, Pint 13, Annual 14, Ketchup 15, Repugnant 17, Cupboards 18, Present 20, Untidy 21, Bill 24, Consomme 26, Pullover 28, Echo 29, Answer 31, Maudlin 34, Dining car 36, Worldwide 38, Amateur 39, Writer 40, Evil 41, Abnormal 42, Greetings.
DOWN: 1, Claptrap 2, Turnip 3, Abundant 4, Result 5, Implicit 6, Brake pedal 7, Pontoon 8, Tether 11, Apostle 16, Grease 19, Epoch 20, Use 22, Ideal 23, Rotund 25, Monochrome 26, Par 27, Headway 30, Werewolf 31, Murderer 32, Needless 33, Envelop 35, Nearby 36, Whinge 37, Invent.

SU DO KU X - 3786

5		4	8			2		
9								
	2	6		4	7	1	9	
						6		
				7				
				1	2		8	
	5							
			3					2
				6			5	8

SOLUTION TO 3785

5	8	6	9	7	4	3	2	1
3	4	1	5	6	2	7	9	8
7	2	9	1	3	8	6	5	4
1	7	3	6	2	5	4	8	9
4	5	2	7	8	9	1	6	3
9	6	8	4	1	3	5	7	2
6	9	7	8	4	1	2	3	5
8	3	4	2	5	7	9	1	6
2	1	5	3	9	6	8	4	7

To solve the puzzle:
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

(From left) Satwik M, Yukta Harsha and Siddhanth M with their spoils.

U-13 Karnataka paddlers win three medals

BENGALURU, DHNS: Three Karnataka paddlers Siddhanth M, Satiwk M and Yukta Harsha won the bronze medals in their respective U-13 categories of the WTT Youth Contenders in Vadodara, Gujarat on Saturday.

The trio made semifinal round exits in the singles event with Siddanth losing to Dev Bhatt in four games 4-11, 11-5, 9-11, 5-11 (1-3) while Satwik fought hard against Ashwajith M for a 11-5, 5-11, 11-6, 3-11, 6-11 (2-3) defeat in the boys event.

In the women's singles last-four battle, Yukta fell to Divija Paul in straight games 2-11, 10-12, 5-11 (0-3).

Results: Semifinals: Boys: Ashwajith M bt Satwik M 5-11, 11-5, 6-11, 11-3, 11-6; Dev Pranav Bhatt bt Siddanth M 11-5, 5-11, 11-9, 11-5.

Girls: Divija Paul bt Yukta Harsha 11-2, 12-10, 11-5.

Joshua returns to Britain

LONDON, AFP: Former world heavyweight champion Anthony Joshua has reportedly flown back to Britain after a fatal car crash in Nigeria that killed two of his close friends.

His return on Friday comes after Nigerian police charged the driver of the vehicle, Adeniyi Mobolaji Kayode, 46, with "dangerous driving causing death".

He is due to appear in court on January 20.

TENNIS

Swiatek against 'Battle of Sexes'

'It did not have anything to do with social change'

SYDNEY, AFP

Six-time Grand Slam champion Iga Swiatek on Saturday said she saw little point to the "Battle of the Sexes" match and that women's tennis has nothing more to prove.

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka and Australian Nick Kyrgios faced off in a highly publicised and controversial exhibition match in Dubai a week ago.

Kyrgios won 6-3, 6-3 with Sabalenka's side of the court reduced in size by nine percent in an attempt to restrict his power and speed advantage.

It bore little resemblance to the era-defining 1973 "Battle of the Sexes" encounter between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs.

Back then, there was more at stake with the nascent women's professional tour, set up by King, fighting for legitimacy and prize money.

"I haven't watched because I don't watch stuff like that," world No. 2 Swiatek said in Sydney, where she opens her season at the United Cup.

"I think for sure it attracted a lot of attention. It was entertainment, but I wouldn't say that had anything to do with social change or any important topics.

"I think the name was just the same as the one from the Billie Jean King match in '73. That's it.

"There were no more similarities because I feel like women's tennis stands on its own right now.

"We have so many great athletes and great stories to present, we don't necessarily need to compare to men's tennis.

"Honestly, there doesn't need to be any competition."

The Polish star, who is preparing for the Australian Open this month, the only Grand Slam she is yet to win, said the mixed-teams United Cup was a better way to celebrate men's and women's tennis.

"I think actually events like this one, United Cup, brings tennis together and WTA fans and ATP fans can watch this event with so much excitement," she said.

Poland's Iga Swiatek also said the mixed-teams United Cup was a better way to celebrate men's and women's tennis. AFP

Revenge not on Sabalenka's mind in Melbourne

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka said on Saturday she isn't out for revenge after losing her Australian Open crown in a shock loss to American Madison Keys last year, reports AFP from Brisbane.

Sabalenka went into the final at Melbourne Park aiming to become the first woman since Martina Hingis to win three consecutive Australian Opens. But she was undone by United States' Keys, who won her maiden Slam in an inspired performance on Rod Laver Arena.

The Belarusian said there was no difference coming to Australia as the champion or as the runner-up.

"The goal is always to bring my best tennis."

Gauff rescues champions US

PERTH, AFP

Coco Gauff rode to the rescue with a 6-1, 6-1 hammering of Solana Sierra to nudge the United States towards a 2-1 defeat of Argentina on Saturday at the United Cup.

The defending champions trailed 0-1 after Sebastian Baez had earlier shocked sixth-ranked Taylor Fritz 4-6, 7-5, 6-4, despite the American firing down 23 aces.

"I'm so happy, I'm pleased to give a point to Argentina. I felt very confident today," Baez said.

Fritz suffered a minor ankle roll late in the match which put him off his power-hitting game and he was unable to close the gap on Baez, who beat the 28-year-old for the first time in six meetings.

Gauff and Christian Harrison eventually clinched the tie in the mixed doubles decider,

Coco Gauff

defeating Maria Lourdes Carle and Guido Andreozzi 6-4, 6-1.

"I'm really happy, there was a bit of pressure," Gauff said. "I know I can play even better, I want to continue this."

Stan Wawrinka launched the final season of his career with a marathon 5-7, 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/5) win over Arthur Rinderknech to give Switzerland an unassailable 2-0 lead over France.

The 40-year-old joined team-mate Belinda Bencic as a winner after she began the tie 6-2, 6-4 over Leolia Jeanjean. The Swiss won the mixed doubles for a 3-0 final scoreline.

Wawrinka is competing in Perth for the first time, needing to battle for nearly three-and-a-half hours to defeat an opponent a decade his junior.

"After 20 years on the tour it's amazing to finally play here. Today's match was tough but I'm happy we could start 2-0."

Also Saturday, in Sydney, Zhang Zhizhen led China to a 2-1 win over Belgium to begin their tournament. Norway's Casper Ruud stunned Australian number one Alex de Minaur 6-3, 6-3, while Aussie women's singles substitute Storm Hunter beat Malene Helgo 6-2, 7-6 (7/3) when illness stopped first choice Maya Joint. Hunter and John-Patrick Smith won the doubles over Ulrikke Eikeri and Viktor Durasovic 4-6, 6-1, 10-4 for Australia's 2-1 final scoreline.

BGC begins 150th anniversary celebrations

BENGALURU, DHNS

The sixth edition of the Bangalore Golf League (BGL) to be held on January 9-10 was announced at an event here on the occasion of Bangalore Golf Club's 150th year anniversary on Saturday.

The BGL, which first started in 2019 with 16 teams, will have 20 teams comprising 15 golfers each for the upcoming edition.

The premier golf club, said to be the second oldest in India behind the Royal Calcutta Golf Club in Kolkata, began operations in 1876.

And to mark the 150th-year landmark this year, a new BGC logo was also unveiled during the event.

Before the 20 teams were introduced and divided into five groups of four team each, all the previous captains of BGC were honoured for their service.

A felicitation ceremony also took place for the BGC's main and fellowship teams, who beat Karnataka Golf Association at KGA in the annual duel between the two most well-known golfing hubs in Bengaluru.

The new logo unveiled by the BGC in Bengaluru on Friday. DH PHOTO

Bangalore Golf Club captain Ravikumar Raju G (second from left), along with former captains, sets off the club's 150th anniversary celebrations with the unveiling of the new logo in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTOS/ B K JANARDHAN

Top boxers for National meet

GREATER NOIDA, PTI: Top Indian pugilists, including world champion Meenakshi, Olympian Nikhat Zareen and several other World Boxing Cup medallists, will vie for honours in the Elite Men and Women National Boxing Championships to held here from Sunday.

The competition will see the men's and women's events being held simultaneously at the same venue, with nearly 600 boxers from across the country set to participate.

Government of Karnataka (Zilla Panchayat Gadag)
District Health and Family Welfare office, Gadag
Ph No. 08372-233996 E-mail : dhogadag@gmail.com
No: SUPPLY/TENDER /367/2025-26 Date : 02.01.2026

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION

Online Tenders are invited in TWO Bid System for the supply of Laboratory Chemical & Equipments to District Health & F.W. Department, Gadag. For more Further Information visit the E procurement Website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in using this tender reference Tender Reference No–DHFWS/2025-26/IND2052 Can be Verified.

Sd/- District Health and Family
DIPR/Gadag/KSMCA/497/25-26 **Welfare Officer, Gadag**

Government of Karnataka
Agriculture Department
OFFICE OF THE JOINT DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE
Center of Excellence Building, Behind National College, Vidya Nagar, HosapeteHarihar Road, Vijayanagara District-583203.Phone No.: 08394-200240
E-mail ID:jdavijayanagar@gmail.com
No. JDA.VNR/EST/389/2025-26 Date : 31.12.2025

Tender Advertisement

As per Joint Director of Agriculture and related sub Offices Tender for the year 2025-26 has called for RAITHA SAMPARKA KENDRA – STOCK MAINTAINANCE ASSISTANT (RSK- SMA). In Agriculture Directorate scheme, In two cover both (Technical & Financial) mode in the prescribed format for taking RSK SMA outsource persons through Manpower Agencies, last date for participating is 07/01/2025 upto 4:00 pm obtained through the website https://KPPP.Karnataka.gov.in, Further derails can be obtained for the said office during office hours

Tender No: AD/2025-26/SE0447
Sd/- Joint Director of Agriculture,Vijayanagara.
DIPR/Vijayanagar/2025-26/KSMCA/RO No/438

ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಲಯ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.
ನಂ:ದಾಮಪಾ:ಕಾಅ1.ಇ.ಟೆಂಡರ್:44:2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ:01–01–2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
(ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ)

2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಎಸ್.ಎಫ್.ಸಿ ಮುಕ್ತನಿಧಿಯ ಎಸ್.ಸಿ.ಎಸ್.ಪಿ (ಉಳಿಕೆ) (2ನೇ ಕರೆ) – 01 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ನಿಧಿ – 02 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ನಿಧಿ (ಮಳಿಗೆ ನಿಧಿ). – 14 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಮಾನ್ಯ ಮುಖ್ಯಮಂತ್ರಿಗಳ ಮೂಲ ಸೌಕರ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ (ಸಿ.ಎಂ.ಐ.ಡಿ.ಪಿ) ಅನುದಾನಡಿ – 14 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ಒಟ್ಟು 31 ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಕೆಪಿಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಸಿಂಗಲ್/ಡಬಲ್ ಕವರ್ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು/ಏಜನ್ಸಿದಾರರು/ ಸರಬರಾಜುದಾರರು ಇ–ಪ್ರಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ವೆಬ್ ಸೈಟ್ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ನಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು, ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಯ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ವೆಬ್ ಸೈಟ್ www.davanagerecity.mrc.gov.in ರಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಕೆಪಿಪಿಪಿ ಸಹಾಯಕ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: +91–8046010000 +91–8068948777 ರಿಂದ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ, ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಿಟ್ಟ ಮೊತ್ತ, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ ಮತ್ತು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆ ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಪಿಪಿಪಿ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಗಮನಿಸುವುದು ಹಾಗೂ ಯಾವುದೇ ಪತ್ರಿಕಾ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊರಡಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ.

ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂ.1ರ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ : ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಯಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾದ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 02–01–2026 ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 09–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 16.00 ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ವೇಳೆ : 09–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 17.00 ಟೆಂಡರ್/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 17.30
ಕ್ರಮ ಸಂ.02 ರಿಂದ 31ರ ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗೆ : ಕೆ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಪಿ.ಯಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾದ ದಿನಾಂಕ : 05–01–2026 ಫ್ರಿ ಬಿಡ್ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ (ರೂ. 100 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳ ಮೇಲ್ಮಟ್ಟ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ) : 12–01–2026 ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 20–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 16.00 ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ವೇಳೆ : 20–01–2026 ಸಮಯ : 17.00 ಟೆಂಡರ್/ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ & ವೇಳೆ : 22–01–2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ : 11.00

ವಾಸಾಇ/ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ/613/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26
ಸಹಿ/–ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN:U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No:CEE/Tr(Op)ZH/SEE/EE(C)37/2025-26/12091-95 Date:03.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

KPTCL invites tenders through KPP Portal mode tender from registered KPWD Civil Contractors having EPF and ESI registration and fulfilling the all other requirements as in NIT (of KPP), for the execution of 9 Nos. of Civil works (within Hassan Transmission(Operation) Zone jurisdiction):

Tender Indent No:KPTCL/2025-26/BD/WORK_INDENT 2700(SC), 2701(Cat-2A), 2708(Cat-2A), 2717(ST), KPTCL/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT 2706 (Cat-2A), 2708 (Cat-2A), 2712 (SC), 2716 (SC), 2600 (Cat-2A), All are second call.

The detailed Notification regarding the subject tenders can be got by logging on to **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink **'E Procurement KPTCL'** or to **https://kppp. karnataka.gov.in on or after 04.01.2026.** Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Electy.),
Transmission(Operation) Zone, KPTCL,
3rd Floor, Santhepete,
B.M. Road, Hassan - 573201.

BENGALURU WEST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Zone-2, Vijayanagar Division, 1st Floor, Shasakara Bhavan, 3rd Main Road, Vijayanagar, Bengaluru - 560040.
No: EE(VJN)/TEND/KPPP/13/2025-26 Date: 03-01-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

The Executive Engineer, Vijayanagara Division, BWCC, Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible Tenderers registered in BBMP or equivalent registration with PWD / CPWD or any State Government Organization for the works detailed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work / Category
	(Single Cover System) - (KW-1)
1	Providing Rain Water Harvesting to BBMP Buildings in Vijayanagara Constituency. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 6.50, EMD (in Rs.): Rs. 16,250.00**
	(Two Cover System) - (KW-2 & 3)
2	Providing Security Services to All BBMP Office Buildings in Vijayanagara Constituency. **(Others) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 75.00, EMD (in Rs.): Rs. 1,50,000.00**
3	Providing House Keeping Services to All BBMP Office Buildings in Vijayanagara Constituency. **(Others) Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 25.00, EMD (in Rs.): Rs. 50,000.00**

Calendar of Events: 1) Tender documents can be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in from 13-01-2026 onwards. 2)** Last Date and Time for Receipt of Tenders: **22-01-2026 upto 16.00 Hours. 3)** Date and Time for Opening of Technical Bid: **23-01-2026 at 16.30 Hours. 4)** Date of Opening Financial Bid: **Will be intimated through KPP Portal.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Vijayanagara Division, Zone-2, BWCC.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(Department of AYUSH)
Zilla Panchayath, Ballari, Office of the District Ayush Office Ballari. Veeranagouda Colony, Ashoka Nagar, Near Bhagya Hospital, Opposite Kumarswamy Temple, Ballari-583101 email: dao.Bellary09@gmail.com.
No:DAOB/EST/08/2025-26 Dated: 01.01.2026

E- Tender Notification

District Ayush Officer, District Ayush Office, Ballari has Invited e-tender in KPPP portal to procure Ayush Medicines with the estimated cost of Rs. 102.50 lakhs in two bid cover system as per KPPP act from eligible registered tenderers. Tenderer may bedownload the application and upload the filled e-tender application in https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in with EMD amount until 12.01.2026 @ 05.00 pm.

Sd/- District Ayush Officer, Ballari.
DIPR/Ballari/859/KSMCA/2025-26

Office of the Executive Engineer, P.W.D. Special division, Shimoga
Ph: 08182-222943, E-Mail : spdivision@gmail.com

Short-term Tender Notification (Two cover system)
IFT No. 38/2025-26 Date: 01.01.2025

The Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Shimoga Special Division, invites tenders as per K.T.P.P act 2000, in standard Bid document K/W-4 (two cover system) Contractors has registered in PWD Department Class-3 & above can apply under head of account 3054-03-337-0-05-200-SH Road Maintenance Work of Special Repair works on Kuppalli-Hirekeruru State Highway Road (SH-148) from Chainage 44.665 Kms to 44.750 Kms in Thirthahalli Taluk (INDENT No.30070) and 3054-04-337-1-10-200-200-MDR Road Maintenance work of Special repair work of road joining SH-68 to SH-57 Via Kadadakatte, Vishveshwaranagara, siriyuru, hagalamane, Amrutapura from ch 10.00km to 11.20 km in Bhadravathi taluk (INDENT No.30092) for Maximum Amount put to tender is Rs. 119.62 Lakhs, and Minimum Amount put to tender is Rs. 103.15 Lakhs and Maximum EMD amount is Rs.1.794 lakhs and Minimum EMD amount is Rs. 1.55 Lakhs. Time allowed for completion of work is 09 Months including Monsoon. The tenderers may submit tenders through KPPP- portal of the Government of Karnataka (viz., http://KPPP.karnataka.gov.in). The Tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in Clause 3 of the Section -2 (Instructions to tenderers) of document, to qualify for award of the contract. Tender documents may be downloaded from the KPPP-Portal from 01-01-2026 to 08-01-2026 Last date for Receipt of Tender is on 08-01-2026 at 17.00 PM. The Technical bid will be opned on 09-01-2026 at 05.30 PM onwards and Financial bid will be opened after 10-01-2026 Onwards. If there any changes in publication, it will be publishing through KPPP-Portal only. For more information may be obtained from the office during working hours. Information published in Website is final.

DIPR/SMG/No.20-01 zenkar/2025-26
Sd/-Executive Engineer, PWD Special Division, Shimoga.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(DIRECTORATE OF CHILD PROTECTION, BANGALORE)
DISTRICT CHILD PROTECTION UNIT, KOPPAL
E-Mail : dcpukoppal@gmail.com Ph. No: 08539-225030
Ref: DCPU/OS/Agency/E-Tender/2025-26/1160 Date: 03.01.2026

Tender Notification

District child protection unit, Koppal invites service tender to find eligible outsource man power agency to provide essential various kind 20 no of staffs (Dcpu and Chl 1098) for 2026-27 Period on outsource basis. Tender would be in two cover bid system. Bids can apply through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/#/portal/portal-home (Indent no # DCP/2025-26/SE0230)** web portal. Approximate value of the tender is **62-00 Lakhs.**

Bid application starts from **05.01.2026**, Last date to Submit the bid is **21.01.2026 5:00 pm,** Technical bid opening date would be **22.01.2026 05:30 pm** and Financial bid opening date would be **27.01.2026 03:30 pm.** For more details regarding tender contact District child protection officer, District child protection unit, Koppal. Contact numbers are as follows **08539-225030, 7022105100 & 9686462444.**

Sd/- District Child Protection Officer, DCPU, Koppal
DIPR/Koppal/592/Deshpadepublicity/2025-26

GREATER BENGALURU AUTHORITY
BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of Assistant Conservator of Forest, 9th Cross, Jayanagara 2nd Block, Bengaluru-560011
No. ACF/BSCC/TENDER/PR/01/2025-26 Date : 03-01-2026

SHORT TIME TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

The Assistant Conservator of Forests, BSCC, Bengaluru on behalf of the Commissioner, BSCC invites Service tender two cover system from Contractors registered in CPWD/KPWD/FOREST/Railways/MES/National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the service detailed in the table below.

Sl.	Name of the Work
1	Providing manpower, equipments and vehicle for rapid response team (RRT) for tree removal in Bommanahalli Zone of Bengaluru South City Corporation, on outsourced basis. **Estimated Amount :** Rs. 10,45,000/-, **EMD :** Rs. 26,125/-
2	Providing manpower, equipments and vehicle for rapid response team (RRT) for tree removal in Jayanagara Zone of Bengaluru South City Corporation, on outsourced basis. **Estimated Amount :** Rs. 10,45,000/-, **EMD :** Rs. 26,125/-

Time Schedule : (1) Date of Commencement of Download of RFP Document from KPP website **http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in :** From 05-01-2026. **(2)** Last date and time for uploading online queries in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal : Up to **08-01-2026 5:00 PM (3)** Date and time of Pre-bid Meeting : **08-01-2026, 12:30 PM** at the following venue : Office of ACF, BSCC, 9th Cross, Jayanagara 2nd Block, Palike Building, Bengaluru-560011. **(4)** Last date and time for uploading of RFP in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal : Up to **13-01-2026 5:00 PM (5)** Date and time of online opening of RFP Applications in Karnataka Public Procurement Portal : **14-01-2026 5:10 PM. (6)** Date and time of Online Financial Opening of tender : When approval of Technical Bid. **(7)** Place of opening of RFP : Online at Karnataka Public Procurement Portal. **(8)** Address for Communication : Office of ACF, BSCC, 9th Cross, Jayanagara 2nd Block, Palike Building, Bengaluru-560011. Email Id : acfbbmpsouth@yahoo.co.in Contact : 7019464699

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests, BSCC

LIKE OLD TIMES Superstars' presence serves multiple purposes, not least the growth of youngsters in the right direction

DOMESTIC GAME, international feel

Rohit Sharma

MADHU JAWALI
BENGALURU, DHNS

When Virat Kohli turned up to play a Ranji Trophy match for Delhi against Railways last season, it felt like time had briefly turned back. The Arun Jaitley Stadium was bursting at the seams, buzzing with energy that is rarely seen at domestic games these days. Kohli hadn't featured in a Ranji match for over a decade, and his return transformed a routine fixture into a festive celebration. Fans packed the stands, cameras followed every move and the atmosphere resembled an international match rather than a domestic contest.

A similar scene played out recently during the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy. Rohit Sharma, another former India captain, walked out for Mumbai in Jaipur, and thousands of fans poured into the Sawai Mansingh Stadium just to catch a glimpse of one of the country's most celebrated cricketers. Once again, it was an unusual sight for a domestic one-day game, where crowds are typically modest and attention is limited.

Kohli, too, made himself available for Delhi's first couple of matches in Bengaluru. Unfortunately, fans there were left disappointed when City police denied permission to host the games at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, robbing them of a chance to see the star batter in action.

Much of this renewed buzz around domestic cricket can be traced back to the BCCI's directive that makes appearances in domestic tournaments mandatory for centrally contracted players, subject to conditions. As a result, Vijay Hazare Trophy venues across the country are seeing a healthy presence of India internationals representing their states. That, in turn, has drawn crowds of varying sizes but almost always larger than what domestic cricket has grown accustomed to. In many ways, it feels like a throwback to an earlier era, when domestic matches routinely attracted packed audiences.

But cricket, like everything else, has evolved. There was a time when television itself was a luxury and live broadcasts were rare. Cricket wasn't available at the click of a button or streamed endlessly across platforms. The volume of matches was limited, and fans latched on to every opportunity to watch the game live. Seeing legends like GR Vishwanath or Sunil Gavaskar in a domestic fixture didn't require elaborate planning or expensive tickets; it could be as simple as taking an afternoon off and walking into a nearby ground.

For years, Test cricket was the only format that truly mattered. One-day internationals slowly gained prominence, and the idea of a year-round cricket wasn't in vogue. There was no sense of saturation or a feeling of overkill. The calendar was lighter and players weren't stretched to their limits across formats and leagues.

The reluctance of modern-day cricketers, especially those who juggle multiple formats, is understandable. The mental and physical toll of international cricket is immense, and with little breathing space between assignments, one can hardly begrudge players for skipping domestic cricket now and then. That said, a complete shunning of the domestic game is harder to justify.

Over the course of a career, there are several opportunities for international cricketers to turn out for their state teams.

If nothing else, it is a way of acknowledging the system that shaped them. The value of a Kohli or a Rohit in a state team's dressing room cannot be measured in runs or results. Young cricketers learn simply by watching how they go about their work. Their preparation, discipline and mindset offer lessons on what it takes not just to reach the international level, but to stay there for years.Former Karnataka and Vidarbha batter Ganesh Satish, who shared a dressing room with Rahul Dravid, speaks from experience. Dravid, famously, rarely missed an opportunity to play for Karnataka.

"It makes a big difference to young cricketers," Satish says. "Just watching him prepare, the level of intensity, the insights he shared... It was incredible. I remember a game against Punjab when we were discussing Manpreet Goni. We spoke about the bounce he generated because of his height, but Rahul said it was the full ball that was more dangerous. It may sound simple, but those observations come only with experience."

Satish recalls batting with Dravid as well. "The way he approached each over, each bowler was a lesson you can only learn by being in his presence, not by watching him on TV."

Another former Karnataka cricketers B Akhil goes a step forward.

"We had absolute role models to follow (in Karnataka side) when we were youngsters," he notes. "You can't think of bigger role models than Anil Kumble, Rahul Dravid, Javagal Srinath or Venkatesh Prasad... I am not sure if we have cricketers of similar pedigree now. Their commitment to Karnataka cricket was absolute. "They were not just great cricketers, but equally great human beings. Their humility, despite being such big stars, kept us grounded. Cricket-wise you couldn't have asked for bigger guides. There was so much to learn whenever they played with us, but I would value their conduct even more. It helps you beyond your playing career," he offers.

Rohit and Kohli, now active only in ODIs, may not appreciate the idea of being "forced" to play domestic cricket. Kohli may well be right when he says a few hours of practice is enough for him to get into shape after so many years at the top. Still, every player who has risen through the domestic structure carries some responsibility to give back. Not out of obligation alone, but to keep the system vibrant, competitive and relevant for the next generation.

There is also the fans' perspective to consider. Cricket today is everywhere -- on televisions, phones and streaming platforms. International stars are more accessible than ever, yet their physical presence in domestic matches has become rarer, and therefore more special. That is why Kohli turning up for a Ranji Trophy game or Rohit pulling on Mumbai colours in the Vijay Hazare Trophy triggers such frenzy. Those moments are reminders that domestic cricket still finds resonance with the public. And when the biggest names show up, that pull only grows stronger.

Virat Kohli

Hospitalised Martyn progressing well

BRISBANE, PTI: Former Australia cricketer Damien Martyn, who was diagnosed with meningitis and admitted in a Gold Coast hospital recently, is on the path of recovery, according to a report quoting his family.

The 54-year-old former right-handed batter, who played 67 Tests, was reported to be in an induced coma following a bout of meningitis.

In its first statement following his hospitalisation, the cricketer's family has said "Damien is progressing well," according to Herald Sun Sport.

"Damien Martyn's family has expressed its 'deepest appreciation' to staff at Gold Coast University Hopsital in their first public statement since the cricket great was hospitalised with meningitis," the report added.

Dragons edge Toofans in shootout

CHENNAI, AGENCIES: Accord Tamil Nadu Dragons secured a thrilling penalty shootout victory against Hyderabad Toofans to begin their campaign with a bonus point in the opening game of the Men's Hero Hockey India League (HIL) at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium on Saturday.

The two teams were held at 3-3 in regulation time, before the Dragons clinched a 4-2 win in the shootout, with Prince Deep Singh making two crucial saves.

In regulation time, Uttam Singh (4th), Thomas Sorsby (9th) and Karthi Selvam (32nd) scored for Dragons, while Amandeep Lakra (12th, 18th) and Arthur De Sloover (37th) scored for Toofans.

SG Pipers gave an authoritative performance to defeat JSW Soorma Hockey Club 3-1 and remain at the top of the points table in the Women's Hockey India League in Ranchi. Lola Riera (13th), Jyoti Singh (18th) and Sunelita Toppo (58th) scored for the Pipers.

TENNIS BENGALURU OPEN

Nagal draws local lad Dev

All six Indian players avoid seeded foreign players in opening round

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

(From left) Indian tennis players Saketh Myneni, Manas Dhamne, Sumit Nagal, Prajwal Dev, Aryan Shah and Dakshineshwar Suresh pose ahead of the Bengaluru Open at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTO/ B K JANARDHAN

India's top-ranked singles player Sumit Nagal (world No. 275) will square off with Karnataka's wildcard entrant Prajwal Dev (No. 629) in the opening round of the Bengaluru Open following the main event's draw ceremony that took place at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium on Saturday.

All six Indian players — including Aryan Shah, Karan Singh, Manas Dhamne and Dhakshineswar Suresh — avoided seeded names led by World No. 96 and 2021 French Open semifinalist Pedro Martinez, who will face a qualifier in the opening round, starting on Monday.

Furthermore, six Indians will compete among 24 qualifiers for six spots in the main draw with the likes of experienced Ramkumar Ramanathan, Sidharth Rawat, Manish Sureshkumar among others, domestic names in the fray for the newly-upgraded ATP Challenger 125 event for its special 10th edition.

In the doubles draw, several Indian pairs will be competing for top honours, including top seeds N Sriram Balaji and Austria's Neil Oberleitner who will face Ukrainian-Finnish pair of Vladyslav Orlov and Eero Vasa in the opening round. Experienced Saketh Myneni will team up with Adil Kalyanpur as a wildcard pair and will face Nagal and Harris Lloyd in the opening round. In total, 13 Indians are competing in the doubles draw, including Karnataka's Niki Poonacha among several of the names competing in the singles draw.

Nagal best bet

With the likes of Martinez, France's second seed Harold Mayot (No. 293), UK's third seed Jay Clarke (413) and South Africa's fourth seed Lloyd Harris in fray in the singles draw, home fans would expect Sumit Nagal to make a deep run in the tournament and revive memories of his 2017 triumph while no Indians made it beyond the opening round last year.

However, Nagal's recent form remains a worry as the leading Indian slipped 170-odd positions in the ATP rankings in 2025 while he is on a collision course with second-seed Mayot in the second round. Nagal, however, is not taking any pressure about his chances.

"I am not getting too ahead of myself and worry about how far I can go in this event," the 28-year-old told the media. "For me it's one day at a time, I will take it match by match as I need to enjoy what I like doing the most which is playing tennis. Youngster Aryan, who is the second-highest-ranked Indian player at 329, will face Kazakhstan's Beibit Zhukayev for their first-ever face-off. A delighted Aryan expressed his pleasure in playing his first-ever singles draw after making a qualifying round exit to Karan last year. "I feel so glad to be in the main draw after not making the main draw last year," said the 20-year-old man from Gujarat.

"Last year, I had to kind of beg for a wildcard to play here but this year I am in the main draw on merit which really makes it special. As far as my rival is concerned, I have to study him a bit as I have never heard of him before."

Alonso unsure of Mbappe absence length

MADRID, AFP: Real Madrid coach Xabi Alonso admitted on Saturday he does not know how long injured superstar Kylian Mbappe will be sidelined for.

The French striker was diagnosed with a knee strain on Wednesday, expected to keep him out for at least three weeks.

"We'll try to make it happen quickly, it depends a lot on how he feels, but we'll try to get him back as quickly as possible," Alonso told a news conference.

"When is as soon as possible? That's the question. I don't know."

The coach said he hopes Mbappe will be back to take part in the Spanish Super Cup, with Los Blancos facing rivals Atletico Madrid in the semi-final on January 8.

Mbappe, 27, is Madrid's top goalscorer with 29 goals this season across all competitions in 24 appearances.

Alonso will be without the striker for Sunday's La Liga clash against Real Betis at the Santiago Bernabeu.

Madrid trail leaders Barcelona by four points, with the Catalans visiting city rivals Espanyol on Saturday.

Alonso came under heavy pressure in December amid Madrid's inconsistent form, with his future still on the line in the weeks ahead.

One bright spot was Brazilian forward Rodrygo Goes bursting into form towards the end of 2025, and Alonso wants him to continue in the same vein.

"He played some very good games at the end of the year... we need him, like everyone else," said Alonso.

Villa bounce back in grand style

Emery's men cut apart Forest, West Ham lose

LONDON, AFP

Aston Villa bounced back from a chastening defeat at Arsenal to beat Nottingham Forest 3-1 on Saturday and climb to second in the Premier League as West Ham collapsed against basement club Wolves.

Unai Emery's Villa are now just three points behind the table-topping Gunners.

Villa's 11-game winning streak in all competitions was brought to a shuddering halt with a 4-1 defeat at the Emirates Stadium on Tuesday, raising doubts about their ability to maintain a title charge.

But their impressive record at Villa Park remains intact -- they have now won 11 straight matches there since a 3-0 defeat to Crystal Palace in August.

England forward Ollie Watkins gave Villa a deserved lead on the cusp of half-time with a powerful strike from just outside the area.

John McGinn doubled the home side's lead early in the second period before Morgan Gibbs-White gave Forest hope of an unlikely point.

But Scotland midfielder McGinn scored his second goal of the game from distance after a brain freeze from Forest goalkeeper John Victor, who inexplicably charged out of his area.

McGinn collected Youri Tielemans' long ball and remained cool, sidestepping the 'keeper and stroking the ball into the empty net.

The win takes Villa to 42 points, three behind leaders Arsenal, and one ahead of Manchester City, who host manager-less Chelsea on Sunday. Villa boss Emery told Sky Sports that his players and coaching staff had held a meeting after their drubbing at the Emirates.

"I am so happy," he said. "We had to recover our energy and our confidence. Here, at Villa Park, the energy we create was really important.

"Forest are competitive. After the Arsenal match we met. The players and staff, how we are doing this season, how we are feeling, how we needed to keep the same consistency as before. How we needed to be together and strong."

Forest, who have now suffered four straight league defeats, remain one place above the relegation zone, four points clear of West Ham, who slumped to a damaging 3-0 loss at Molineux.

Sean Dyche, brought in to replace the sacked Ange Postecoglou in October, said he knew his task would be difficult when he arrived at the club.

Elsewhere on Saturday, Brighton beat Burnley 2-0, courtesy of goals from Georginio Rutter and Yasin Ayari.

Results: Aston Villa: 3 (Watkins 45+1, McGinn 49th, 73rd) bt Nottingham Forest: 1 (Gibbs-White 61st); Brighton: 2 (Rutter 29th, Ayari 47th) bt Burnley: 0; Wolves: 3 (Arias 4th, Hwang 31st, Mane 41st) bt West Ham: 0.

Karnataka's Jonathan, Army's Ajay shine

Jonathan Gavin Antony

NEW DELHI, PTI

Army shooter Ajay Kumar clinched the men's 10m air pistol gold while Karnataka's Jonathan Gavin Antony made a cleansweep of the top-podium spots in the sub-youth, youth and junior categories to make it a golden treble in the National Shooting Championships here on Saturday.

Kumar finished on top with a score of 241.1, edging out Railways' Shubham Bisla, who settled for silver with 240.1 after a closely-fought final. Haryana's Anmol Jain secured the bronze with 220.0.

Haryana's Shiva Narwal narrowly missed the podium, finishing fourth with 197.2, while Navy shooters Aakash Bhardwaj and Ujjawal Malik came in fifth and sixth. The qualification round saw intense competition, with Ujjawal Malik (Navy), Rahul Serawat (Rajasthan), and Shiva Narwal (Haryana) shooting identical 584, differentiated by 'inner-10' counts.

Malik topped the qualification on 584 (22x), followed by Serawat (584 (17x) and Narwal (584 (17x). Arjun Singh Cheema (583-23x), Anmol Jain (583-22x), Ajay Kumar (583-20x), Shubham Bisla (583-16x), and Aakash Bhardwaj (582-25x) completed the list of finalists.

Among notable names, Paris Olympics bronze medallist Sarabjot Singh finished 19th with 580, while reigning world champion Samrat Rana ended 71st on 576.

John McGinn celebrates after scoring Aston Villa's second goal in their 3-1 victory over Nottingham Forest at Villa Park on Saturday. AFP

Injury-prone Mayank close to full fitness

NEW DELHI, PTI: Injury-prone Indian pace sensation Mayank Yadav is close to attaining full bowling fitness after spending almost an year on the sidelines due to a lower back stress fracture.

The 23-year-old made heads turn with his express pace in IPL 2024 and went on to play for India in the shortest format. However, he played just two competitive games in the 2025 edition due to the back injury.

Despite his fitness issues, his IPL side Lucknow Super Giants showed faith in the Delhi fast bowler and retained him ahead of the auction last month.

"Mayank Yadav is progressing well through his rehabilitation and has successfully achieved bowling at 90 per cent intensity, with a current workload of 18 overs per week," a BCCI official said, referring to Mayank's rehabilitation at Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru.

All-round Gujarat stay in complete control

BENGALURU, DHNS: An all-round Gujarat side took massive strides towards sealing their semifinal spot with a bowling performance that left Karnataka way behind on the third day of the Cooch Behar Trophy quarterfinal at the Sardar Patel Stadium in Valsad on Saturday.

Having resumed batting on 160/3, their overnight score, Karnataka's Varun Patel (52, 107b, 8x4), Anvay Dravid (29, 72b, 3x4) and Krishav S Somsundar (27, 70b, 3x4, 1x6) showcased some resistance.

Besides the trio, none of the other batters could stay in the middle and stitch partnerships as the visiting side was bowled out for 280 in 106.2 overs, giving the opponents a healthy 171-run lead. Rudra N Patel (3/92) and Nihal S Patel (3/20) picked up six wickets between them.

Gujarat, in their second essay, continued to pile misery, as none of the Karnataka bowlers could inflict any damage to drag them back into the contest. At stumps on the penultimate day, Gujarat were 178/2 in 41 overs, leading Karnataka by 349 runs.

Brief scores: Gujarat: 451 & 178/2 in 41 overs (Malay V Shah 82 n.o., Purav M Pujara 59 n.o.) vs Karnataka (O/n: 160/3) 280 all out in 106.2 overs (Dhruv Krishnan 82, Aadesh D Urs 39, Anvay Dravid 29, Varun Patel 52, Krishav S Somsundar 27; Rudra P Patel 3-92, Kavya V Patel 2-33, Nihal S Patel 3-20).

King Ke wins feature

MUMBAI SELECTIONS

King Ke, trained by Pesi Shroff and to be ridden by Siddharth, appeals most in the small field of three runners in the fray for the Maharastra, Gujarat & Goa Trophy, the feature event of the races to be run over a mile and a quarter at the races on Sunday. The first race starts at 1:30 pm.

1. White Metal Trophy (Div II) - 1200M: Spot Light 1, Applause 2, Mila 3.
2. Aslam Khader Salver - 2000M: Dedication 1, Diego Garcia 2, Little John 3.
3. Behram A Engineer Salver - 1400M: Star Impact 1, Tyrannus 2, All For Love 3.
4. Kheem Singh Salver - 1200M: Margaretta 1, Victory Affair 2, Mystica 3.
5. Maharastra, Gujarat & Goa Area Trophy - 2000M: King Ke 1, Kimiko 2.
6. White Metal Trophy (Div I) - 1200M: Chelsea 1, Believe 2, Ariyana Star 3.
7. FK Vakil Salver - 1000M: Enforcer 1, Akitania 2, Rafael 3.
8. RR Komandur Plate - 1200M: Whisper 1, Agatha 2, Jetfire 3.
Day's best: Dedication. **Jackpot:** 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. **I treble:** 2, 3, 4. **II treble:** 6, 7, 8.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

5th Ashes: Australia vs England **(day 1, 5 am). LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

FOOTBALL

EPL: Leeds vs Man United **(6:00 pm)**, Everton vs Brentford, Fulham vs Liverpool, Newcastle vs Crystal Palace, Tottenham vs Sunderland **(8:30 pm)**, Man City vs Chelsea **(11:00 pm). LIVE** on **Star Sports Network, JioHotstar.**

HOCKEY

HIL: Soorma Hockey Club vs Shrachi Bengal Tigers **(men 5 pm)**, Kalinga Lancers vs Ranchi Royals **(men, 7:30 pm)**; Shrachi Bengal Tigers vs Ranchi Royals **(women, 3 pm). LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network.**

CRICKET ODI SQUAD SELECTION

Siraj returns for NZ series

Shreyas included subject to fitness; Under-fire Pant retains his spot

NEW DELHI, PTI

Senior India fast bowler Mohammed Siraj on Saturday made a comeback to the ODI side for the three-match home series against New Zealand while batter Shreyas Iyer was included subject to fitness clearance.

Siraj, who was overlooked for the home series against South Africa, is back in the ODI setup. His new ball partner Jasprit Bumrah was expectedly rested from the series with the focus on the shortest format ahead of the T20 World Cup beginning next month.

Iyer, who was hospitalised during the ODI series in Australia in November for spleen laceration, will need to prove his match fitness in a Vijay Hazare Trophy game on January 6 to get fitness clearance from the Centre of Excellence (COE). He returns to the squad as vice-captain.

Pacer Mohammed Siraj (left) made a comeback to the Indian ODI setup after being picked for the New Zealand series while Shreyas Iyer has been included, subject to fitness clearance. FILE PHOTOS

SQUAD

- Shubman Gill (C), Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul (WK), Shreyas Iyer (VC; subject to fitness clearance), Washington Sundar, Ravindra Jadeja, Mohd Siraj, Harshit Rana, Prasidh Krishna, Kuldeep Yadav, Rishabh Pant (WK), Nitish Kumar Reddy, Arshdeep Singh, Yashasvi Jaiswal
- Schedule: **Jan 11:** 1st ODI (Vadodara); **Jan 14:** 2nd ODI (Rajkot); **Jan 18:** 3rd ODI (Indore).

Pandya not cleared

Star all-rounder Hardik Pandya was not cleared by the COE to bowl 10 overs in a match and therefore the selectors did not include him in the team for the series beginning in Vadodara on January 11. There is also little point in risking him with T20 showpiece around the corner. The other two matches will be played in Rajkot and Indore on January 14 and 18 respectively.

"Shreyas Iyer's availability is subject to fitness clearance from BCCI COE," said the BCCI in a statement.

"Hardik Pandya has not been cleared by the BCCI COE to bowl 10 overs in a match, and considering the ICC Men's T20 World Cup to follow, his workload is being managed," it added.

Ruturaj Gaikwad could not get the selectors' nod despite scoring a fine hundred during the South Africa series. With captain Shubman Gill and Iyer not part of the South Africa ODIs due to injuries, Gaikwad had made a splendid 105 off 83 balls batting at number four in Raipur. After being dropped from the T20 World Cup squad, Gill will take back the ODI leadership mantle from KL Rahul, who led the team in the former's absence.

Despite speculation, Rishabh Pant has retained his place as the second wicket-keeper in the squad.

Tilak Varma and Dhruv Jurel, who were part of the previous series, have been left out with senior players returning from injuries.

Iyer to test fitness by playing Vijay Hazare game

India batter Shreyas Iyer is set to play his first competitive match since sustaining a spleen injury last October when he turns out for Mumbai against Himachal Pradesh in the Vijay Hazare Trophy but his availability for the upcoming series against New Zealand will be subject to fitness, reports PTI from Mumbai.

Iyer had suffered the injury during the third and final ODI against Australia in Sydney and was hospitalised for spleen laceration with internal bleeding. The BCCI had informed about Iyer's release in early November and the right-handed batter has been on a comeback trail since.

According to a source in the BCCI's Centre Of Excellence in Bengaluru, the 31-year-old will play in the 50-overs premier domestic competition for his home side Mumbai.

"Shreyas successfully completed the first 50-over RTP (return to play) match on January 2, 2026. He will be playing the Vijay Hazare match on January 6th as part of his second RTP match before final fitness clearance," the official told PTI on Saturday.

Padikkal stars again as Karnataka exact revenge

Opener slams his fourth century in five games

BENGALURU, DHNS

The in-form Devdutt Padikkal smashed his fourth century in five matches as defending champions Karnataka exacted a sweet revenge on Tripura and rose to the top of Group A in the Vijay Hazare Trophy after pace-setters Madhya Pradesh slipped against Puducherry in Ahmedabad on Saturday.

Riding on Padikkal's 108, a counter-attacking 79 not out off 43 balls from the big-hitting Abhinav Manohar and 60 from R Smaran, Karnataka posted a formidable 332/7 in 50 overs at the Narendra Modi Stadium.

Pacer Vijaykumar Vyshak (3/54) and leg-spinner Shreyas Gopal (3/33) then bagged three wickets apiece as Karnataka bowled out Tripura for 252 in 49 overs, thereby avenging the bruising Super Over defeat they suffered against the same opponents in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy at the same venue last month.

With Madhya Pradesh suffering a shock four-wicket defeat against Puducherry, Karnataka seized top spot with 20 points from five matches. A win from the next two games will seal their spot in the quarterfinals, scheduled to be held at BCCI's Centre of Excellence from January 12. Karnataka next play Rajasthan on January 6 before taking on MP on January 8.

MP are second on 16 points while Jharkhand and Kerala are placed third and fourth with 12 points each.

Devdutt Padikkal. FILE PHOTO

Group A brief scores: Karnataka: 332/7 in 50 overs (Devdutt Padikkal 108, R Smaran 60, KL Rahul 35, Abhinav Manohar 79 n.o., Shreyas Gopal 29; Abhijit Sarkar 4-50) bt Tripura: 252 all out in 49 overs (Tejasvi Jaiswal 25, Rajat Dey 66, Swapnil Singh 100, Sentu Sarkar 26 n.o.; Vijaykumar Vyshak 3-54, Shreyas Gopal 3-33) by 80 runs. **PoM:** Devdutt Padikkal.

Madhya Pradesh: 228 all out in 49.5 overs (Shubham Sharma 47, Akshat Raghuwanshi 73, Aryan Pandey 46; Sagar Udeshi 2-19, Parth Vaghani 2-40, Aman Khan 3-58) lt to Puducherry: 229/6 in 43 overs (Ajay Rohera 41, Jashwanth Shreeram 29, Parameeswaran Sivaraman 65, Aman Khan 59 n.o.; Shubham Sharma 2-27) by 4 wkts. **PoM:** Aman Khan.

Rajasthan: 225 all out in 46.5 overs (Aditya Rathore 34, Ramnivas Golada 28, Deepak Hooda 70, Manav Suthar 43; Gurjapneet Singh 2-44, Sonu Yadav 2-38, Varun Chakravarthy 4-25) bt Tamil Nadu: 215 all out in 41.4 overs (Athish SR 54, N Jagadeesan 71, Washington Sundar 36; Ashok Sharma 5-58, Manav Suthar 3-44) by 10 runs. **PoM:** Ashok Sharma.

Jharkhand: 311/7 in 50 overs (Kumar Kushagra 143 n.o., Anukul Roy 72; MD Nidheesh 4-46, Baba Aparajith 2-56) lt to Kerala: 313/2 in 42.3 overs (Sanju Samson 101, Rohan Kunnummal 124, Baba Aparajith 41 n.o., Vishnu Vinod 40 n.o.) by 8 wkts. **PoM:** Rohan Kunnummal.

Smith bats away retirement talks ahead of Ashes finale

SYDNEY, AFP

Australia skipper Steve Smith said on Saturday that he had no end date to call time on his career, while keeping England guessing on how his team will line up for the fifth and final Ashes Test.

With the retirement of Usman Khawaja after the Sydney Test on Sunday and Nathan Lyon out injured, Smith will be the oldest player in the Australian line-up alongside Scott Boland.

Asked if he would still be playing at the next Ashes in England in 2027, the 36-year-old was non-committal, but said he was enjoying his cricket.

"I've said it for a while, I'm taking it day-by-day, series-by-series and we'll see where things land," said Smith, who has played 122 Tests and scored more than 10,000 runs.

"I feel like I'm doing alright at the moment, I'm enjoying it, I'm contributing, and having fun. So there's no real end date for me.

"I think with obviously Usman dropping off, he's one of our experienced players, so it probably wouldn't be ideal if him and I went out this week, for instance," he added. "So no, I want to keep playing."

Steve Smith

LIVE 5 AM STAR SPORTS

Khawaja, 39, announced his retirement on Friday, culminating a career where it began after making his debut at the Sydney Cricket Ground in 2011, also against England.

Smith paid tribute to his long-time teammate, but refused to be drawn on the Pakistan-born player's claims of "racial stereotyping" during his career.

"I'm not going into the mind of Usman Khawaja," he said.

Khawaja claimed the way he was treated by media and former players after he played golf before the first Test in Perth and could not bat because of back spasms amounted to "the same racial stereotypes" he had always dealt with.

"I think he's always prepared the same way, he's worked hard and I think some of the stuff around him getting injured when he played golf the day before the game, that was unfair," said Smith.

"He's done that for 15 years and had a pretty good career."

In terms of Australia's team for Sydney, Smith said everything was on the table with another look at the wicket required.

"Could play a couple of all rounders, could play a spinner, could play no spinner," he said.

"We'll figure it out once we see the surface and see which way we want to go about it."

Australia lead the five-Test series 3-1 after eight-wicket wins in Perth and Brisbane, before an 82-run victory in Adelaide ensured they retained the famous urn.

England bounced back to clinch their first Test victory in Australia for 15 years at Melbourne, winning by four wickets inside two days.

Pant finds form as Delhi thump Services

BENGALURU, DHNS: Rishabh Pant and Priyansh Arya scored unbeaten half-centuries while Harshit Rana picked up a four-for as Delhi thumped Services by eight wickets to return to winning ways in their fifth Vijay Hazare Trophy Elite Group D fixture at the BCCI's Centre of Excellence Ground 2.

Delhi, riding on Arya (72 n.o., 45b, 9x4, 3x6) and Pant (67 n.o., 37b, 4x4, 6x6) half-centuries eclipsed Services' 178 all out with 30.2 overs to spare. Having damaged their net run rate (NRR) after their hammering to Odisha, Delhi now managed to improve it drastically and now are on top of the table with 16 points (0.803), followed by Haryana (0.460).

Pant's performance also came on a day when Pant was named in India's squad for the three-match ODI series against New Zealand starting on January 11.

Brief scores: Services: 178 all out in 42.5 overs (Vikas Hathwala 26, Raj Bahadur 25, Harshit Rana 4-47, Prince Yadav 3-28) lt to Delhi: 182/2 in 19.4 overs (Priyansh Arya 72 n.o., Nitish Rana 32, Rishabh Pant 67 n.o.).

AIFF to confirm ISL dates by next week

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

The All Indian Football Federation (AIFF) will reveal the dates for the commencement of the much-delayed Indian Super League (ISL) by next week following the submission of a report by its coordination committee on Saturday.

"The report was formally acknowledged by the AIFF Emergency Committee, which recommended that the league be conducted by the AIFF," read its statement.

The three-member panel, which has held several meetings with the ISL clubs since December 22, stated in its report, which is read by *DH*, to begin the season without further delay while also urging confirmation of the format and number of matches to be played in the truncated season in consultation with the clubs.

It has also been learnt that a fresh tender or request for proposal (RFP) for the new commercial partner and broadcasters will be out by January 15 after a go ahead by the Supreme Court while the league may not commence before the second week of February.

A three-member panel, after consultations with ISL clubs, has urged the AIFF to start the much-delayed ISL at the earliest. PTI FILE PHOTO

As far as the format for the season is concerned, the committee recommended organising a single leg (home-away format) with the table topper winning the league.

Also, the committee partially paid heed to clubs' request of waiving off the participation fees by deferring it to June while keeping the amount to the earlier recommended amount of Rs 1 crore as per AIFF's 20-year proposal.

The committee also suggested that the production and broadcast costs for the season should be handed to the club, with each team taking care of expenses in their home matches while AIFF contributes 18 per cent of the estimated budget which is Rs 5 crore of Rs 40 crore. The clubs earlier argued that AIFF is the league operator and rights holder and should bear league-level operational expense if no broadcaster or commercial partner is appointed.

The clubs also continue to demand financial clarity and responsibility with a long-term roadmap. The committee instead has recommended that the federation should take strict action against unwilling clubs while warning they should be disqualified and relegated to the lower division.

Pak submit provisional squad

LAHORE, PTI: Pakistan have submitted their provisional 15-member squad for the World T20 Cup to the International Cricket Council (ICC) but are yet to make the list public, a reliable source said.

January 1 was the deadline set by the ICC for participating teams to submit their provisional squads and the Pakistan Cricket Board completed the process within the stipulated timeframe, the source.

Not all teams have announced their provisional squads so far.

Teams are permitted to make changes to their provisional squads until January 31 without seeking approval from the ICC. Any alterations after that date will require clearance from the ICC's tournament technical committee.

According to the source, Pakistan's provisional squad includes injured fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi **(in pic)**, former captain Babar Azam, and all-rounder Shadab Khan, who has not played international cricket since May last year due to a shoulder injury.

Shadab returned to competitive cricket in the Big Bash League late last month and has been named in Pakistan's squad for the upcoming three-match T20I series in Sri Lanka starting January 7.

The selectors have largely picked players who are part of the Sri Lanka tour, with the final World Cup squad likely to be firmed up after the series, the source said.

Fast bowler Haris Rauf has not been included even in the provisional squad.

AFI sets steep qualification mark for Asiad 100m

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Athletics Federation of India (AFI) on Saturday revealed the qualification standards for the Asian Games — slated in September-October in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan — setting the benchmark high for men's 100m qualification.

In order to qualify for the individual sprint event, the likes of Animesh Kujur and Karnataka's Manikanta Hoblidhar (personal best 10.19) will have to improve on the national record of 10.18 seconds (set by Animesh last year) to 10.16.

AFI's high standards for the men's 100m is justified too as the gold medal came at 9.97 in the 2022 Asiad while the last medal position came at 10.11.

The standard is set high for men's 4x100m relay too at a stiff 38.81 seconds with the likes of Amlan Borgohain and Gurindervir Singh adding much depth to the line-up. The mentioned quartet set the Indian record at 38.69 last April.

Sprinters like (from left) Gurindervir Singh, Amlan Borgohain, Manikanta Hoblidhar and Animesh Kujur will have to reset the national record to 10.16 seconds at least to qualify for the Asian Games.

For the rest of the event, the qualifying standards are set at a relatively comfortable mark, including men's javelin throw at 77.87 metre while several Indians crossed the 80m mark last season. No qualification standards were set for the long-distance events such as marathon and race walk and qualification will be decided by the selectors owing to the challenging heat of the Indian summer.

At least two track and field athletes can qualify for each individual event, subject to confirmation from AFI's selection committee, which is chaired by Sumariwalla and has long jump legend Anju Bobby George among its members.

Asian Games track and field qualification standards: Men: **100m**:10.16s, **200m**: 20.88s, **400m:** 45.97s, **800m**: 1:48.80s, **1500m**: 3:42.00s, **5000m**: 13:39.18s, **10000m**: 29:00.00s, **3000m Steeple Chase**: 8:36.57s, **110m Hurdles**: 13.63s, **400m Hurdles**: 49.41s; **Long Jump**: 7.91m, **Triple Jump**: 16.28m, **High Jump**: 2.19m, **Pole Vault**: 5.45m, **Shot Put**: 19.41m, **Discus Throw**: 60.13m, **Hammer Throw**: 69.12m, **Javelin Throw**: 77.87m, **Decathlon**: 7250 points, **Marathon**: 2:15:04.00, **4×100m Relay**: 38.81s, **4×400m Relay**: 3:04.23s, **4×400m Mixed Relay**: 3:26.81s. **Women**: **100m**: 11.54s, **200m**: 23.70s, **400m**: 53.72s, **800m**: 2:05.21s, **1500m**: 4:19.45s, **5000m**: 15:36.58s, **10000m**: 33:50.00s, **3000m Steeple Chase**: 9:47.53s, **100m Hurdles**: 13.34s, **400m Hurdles**: 57.21s, **Long Jump**: 6.48m, **Triple Jump**: 13.34m, **High Jump**: 1.80m, **Pole Vault**: 4.10m, **Shot Put**: 16.25m, **Discus Throw**: 55.48m, **Hammer Throw**: 61.72m, **Javelin Throw**: 57.62m, **Heptathlon**: 5605 points, **Marathon**: 2:31:52.00, **4×100mRelay**: 45.24s, **4×400m Relay**: 3:31.23s, **4×400m Mixed Relay**: 3:26.81s.

'Neeraj focussing on rehabilitation'

NEW DELHI, PTI: Star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra is focussing on rehabilitation of his back injury he had suffered just before the World Championships last September and has not yet decided when and where to start the season, Athletics Federation of India (AFI) said on Saturday.

"He (Chopra) is taking a break. He recovering from his injuries. He had two injuries. The focus is on rehabilitation, I think that is the most important thing, not the opener," AFI spokesperson Adille Sumariwalla said when asked about Chopra's likely opening event of the season.

Last year, Chopra began the season in April in a low-key event in South Africa.

Neo-Orientalism 2.0: The digital recolonisation of knowledge

POORVA PAKSHA

Aakash Singh Rathore
as Dr Jekyll is a Professor of Philosophy, Politics and Law, author and editor of over 20 books and counting, and as Mr Hyde, one of India's top-ranking Ironman triathletes
@ASR_metta

'One pill makes you larger/ And one pill makes you small/ Go ask Alice/ When she's ten feet tall'.

Jefferson Airplane's 1967 psychedelic anthem 'White Rabbit' captures the disorienting rush of altered perception – a mind expanding under chemical influence, confronting a world that no longer makes familiar sense. I think of this 'pill' as the LLM, AI's large language models, feeding us a hallucinatory knowledge that feels boundless yet subtly warps reality in orientalist directions.

LLMs are AI behemoths that promise to democratise information. We've marvelled at how these systems synthesise vast swathes of human knowledge, spitting out essays, analyses, and even poetry with uncanny fluency. But pause for a moment: whose knowledge, exactly? The bulk of what's been digitised, published, and uploaded into the global data pool hails from the West, steeped in centuries of orientalist scholarship. From colonial-era textbooks to modern academic tomes, the lens has been one of exoticising the East, reducing its complexities to footnotes in a Eurocentric narrative. Now AI amplifies this, but with a politically correct veneer – lots of apologies baked in, disclaimers about bias, yet the core remains unaltered. It's orientalism with a woke edge, polite but pervasive.

'And if you go chasing rabbits/ And you know you're going to fall/ Tell 'em a hookah-smoking caterpillar/ Has given you the call'.

This isn't just theory. This is the practical machinery of how knowledge gets produced and consumed. Publishing pipelines, academic curricula, and digital archives have long favoured Western paradigms, even when they purport to 'include' non-Western voices. And, of course, the very corrections to this orientalism – the postcolonial and decolonial theories that emerged post-1980s – have themselves been predominantly transatlantic affairs. Entrenched in universities across the USA and UK, these critiques become yet another export, transplanted into the Indian context rather than organically grown here. I explored this in my 2017 book *Indian Political Theory: Laying the Groundwork for Swaraj,* arguing that the nativist turn in Indian political theory was perpetuating orientalist frameworks by assuming that our elite traditions were immediately accessible without critique, ignoring the colonisation of the mind and polity.

What will unfold now, short-to-mid-term, is the digital recolonisation of the Indian mind. As LLMs flood academia, generating student essays, research papers, and even policy briefs, whether we call it plagiarism or augmentation, the humanities and social sciences will be swamped with content moulded by orientalist paradigms. In the transatlantic world, this comes wrapped in guilt-ridden PC-perspectivalism. AI's 'inclusivity' bandages over its orientalist core, fostering a self-righteous neo-colonial attitude.

The word from the West (via AI proxies) is once again universal, especially in India, where resources are scarcer, access to alternative information pools is limited, and self-correction mechanisms are weaker than for the transatlantic scholar. We have fewer libraries, fewer indigenous databases, and more reliance on these 'universal' tools. The result is a neo-orientalist stranglehold on global academia, where Indian thought is refracted through Western filters, accepted not just grudgingly but enthusiastically in regions hungry for efficiency. I had shown in my book that theorists of Indian politics continue to work with categories and concepts alien to the lived social and political experiences of India's common people, emphasising the need to decolonise Indian political theory and rescue it from the grip of Western theories. That was when knowledge was still largely analogue.

'When logic and proportion/ Have fallen sloppy dead/ And the White Knight is talking backwards/ And the Red Queen's off with her head'.

However, amid this gloom, there is a hint of an optimistic horizon: a possible mid-term pivot. Just as the 1980s saw a critical mass of scholars recognise the inherent orientalist and neo-colonial structures in international academia, a similar awakening could dawn. We're focusing on the arts, humanities, and social sciences, where the influx of AI-generated, albeit inflected, information might paradoxically build that critical mass within Indian academia. Imagine: a new reawakening to the system's nature, birthing fresh postcolonial, decolonial, or even anti-orientalist approaches – forging non-colonial, non-orientalist ways of knowledge production and practice. This might kick off, as often happens, with South Asians in transatlantic hubs, then get imitated, refined, and radicalised back in India.

'Remember what the dormouse said/ Feed your head/ Feed your head'.

'White Rabbit' ends not in surrender but with a defiant imperative: feed your head. In the shadow of AI's neo-orientalist flood, this is the gambit: the very distortion it imposes might finally provoke a backlash strong enough to redefine knowledge on truly equitable terms.

THE BIG LENS

Keep off the Aravallis

India is home to seven major mountain ranges, which collectively function like a natural fortress guarding the country from all directions. Of these, the Aravalli Range, a Paleoproterozoic-era fold mountain range, is considered the oldest.

In November 2025, the Supreme Court of India accepted the recommendations of a committee under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the definition of the Aravalli hills, ostensibly, to protect the range. This definition categorised an Aravalli hill as a landform at least 100 metres above local relief, and an Aravalli range as two or more such hills within 500 metres. Although the judgment mandated a plan for 'sustainable mining' and prohibited new leases, mining of certain critical minerals was exempted. Environmentalists raised concerns that this definition would exclude a large portion of the Aravallis from protection, potentially causing irreversible harm.

Following protests, public criticism, and appeals for clarification, the Court took *suo motu* cognisance and kept its earlier judgment and the committee report in abeyance. A new, independent expert committee has been ordered to re-examine the definition and its ecological impacts. Until further orders, no new or renewed mining leases are permitted. This was a welcome correction, though a total ban would have sent a stronger message.

The 100-metre threshold was bad science; its acceptance by the Court also conflicted with environmental jurisprudence and could have exposed one of India's most critical ecological systems to the interests of greedy developers and fly-by-night operators. The fallout would have been catastrophic – ground flattened, forests destroyed, and aquifers clogged. The Court-directed Management Plan for Sustainable Mining and a proposed green wall – tree cover around the Aravalli Range, covering 29 districts of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Delhi to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030 – would have remained on paper. By declaring that land below a certain elevation as "not Aravalli", the policy and judgment effectively legalised destruction, before it was kept on hold.

Seshadri Chari
reads between the lines on big national and international developments from his vantage point in the BJP and the RSS
@seshadrichari

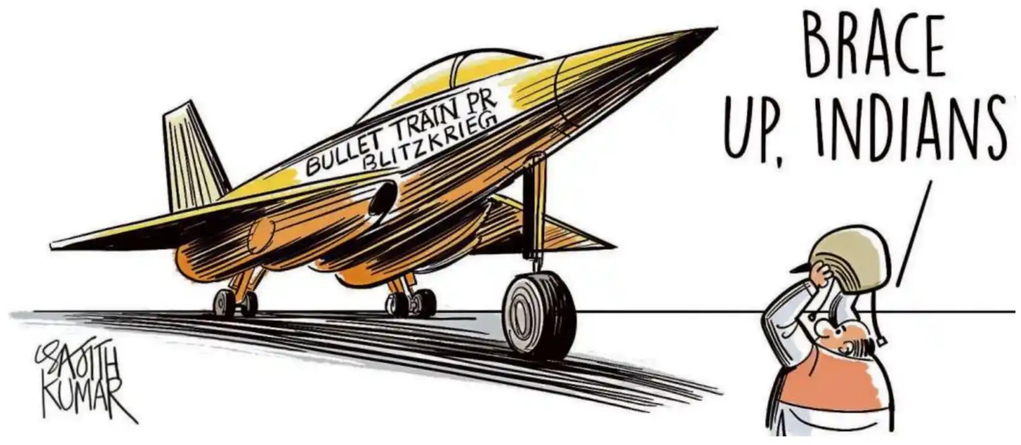
The 'height rule' is unjustifiable from an environmental science perspective. Hydrology does not recognise altitude cut-offs. Groundwater recharge depends on rock fractures, soil cover, vegetation, watersheds, and drainage basins or slopes, features found abundantly in low-lying Aravalli ridges, and not peaks. Destroying them would result in a drastic fall in water tables, drying up of wells and ponds in the nearby villages, and even sporadic inundation. The heavy September floods in Gurugram – situated in and around the Aravalli hills – were also a result of unchecked urbanisation cutting into these ancient foothills.

The height-based definition becomes laughable more from a biodiversity standpoint – animals, birds, pollinators, and plant species rely on continuous landscapes, not isolated hilltops. Fragmenting "low" stretches breaks ecological connectivity and accelerates local extinction. Height-based zoning ignores decades of ecological research. The government needs to make its position on the matter clear and do everything under its command to protect the Aravallis, especially from those who argue that development comes with collateral damage to ecology, thus making a mockery of the government's policies and efforts in sustainable development.

These decisions are particularly concerning for the precedents they set. About 2,000 kilometres from the Aravallis, the Bannerghatta National Park in Karnataka is facing an existential threat as its eco-sensitive zone is sought to be reduced to 168.8 sq km from the original 268.9 sq km. It is only a matter of time before several other ecologically protected zones are handed over to mining and real estate sharks in the name of development.

The government, the opposition parties, and the civil society need to converge on these issues and show real intent on ecological security. Those who castigate this government should also look at their own past to assess the damage they have caused to the Aravallis and other such areas by sanctioning mining contracts and townships. These cities were neither built in a day nor under one government. The Aravalli Range and other mountains, water basins, rivers, and forests deserve protection as living systems, not as contour lines on a map or a political issue to spar over. They have to exist on the ground, not merely on the coloured pages of an atlas.

India's mountains, rivers, and forests are national commons. There must be a socio-political consensus on declaring them national assets and preserving them for posterity. Instead of placing this critical issue in a legal maze with long-drawn bureaucratic processes, the apex court would do better to issue an order in five words – the Aravallis are off limits.



THE LIVING STREAM

Some thoughts for the New Year

The public library in the neighbourhood I grew up in mattered hugely in my boyhood. The rows of glossy *Asterix* and *Tintin* comics, the sturdy hardback editions of Nancy Drew and Hardy Boys detective series, and the black-spined Penguin classics were the sections I came to know first. A nominal one-time subscription fee let readers take home up to four books at a time.

Browsing and borrowing in this modest-sized public library took place amid readers – mostly men – silently poring over newspapers and magazines on reading stands lining two of the walls. The public library in the neighbourhood I live in now is run out of an upstairs room inside an uninviting GBA office building.

Public libraries can be truly beautiful community spaces. All effort must be made to revitalise them in Bengaluru and elsewhere in the state.

Individuals in Bengaluru interested in learning the Kannada language well are mostly left to fend for themselves. The Karnataka government, which runs thirty Kannada learning centres in Bengaluru – some housed in institutions such as the RBI and NIMHANS – has recently announced that it will set up forty more in the city and sixty elsewhere in the state. These centres offer classes in basic conversational Kannada over a three-month period.

The low ambition and narrow imagination behind this effort are simply striking. A city like Bengaluru ought to have at least half a dozen well-designed institutes that help interested individuals to acquire different levels of proficiency in speaking and writing Kannada through innovative curricula and teaching methods. In doing so, the city becomes more linguistically hospitable as well.

Single-screen movie theatres in Bengaluru are well on the road to extinction. Thirty years ago, there were close to two hundred of them, around two-thirds of which no longer exist. The city's real estate realities make this decline appear inevitable. But can the government not step in to buy one or two iconic theatres in centrally located areas – to preserve them as heritage sites and cultivate them as living cinema spaces where high-quality films from across the world are screened daily?

Chandan Gowda
The Vidyashilp Professor looks for new ways of looking
@Chandan_Gowda73

In the hands of talented film curators, these spaces would provide rich cinematic experiences in a city that offers so little serious cinema to the public. They would enhance the city's character too.

Set up by the state government in each of the 198 wards in 2017 – two dozen of which were mobile units – Indira canteens served the vital purpose of making meals affordable to daily wage earners, street vendors, students, and autorickshaw drivers, among others. Breakfast cost five rupees, while lunch and dinner cost ten each. The high food costs in Bengaluru make these canteens an especially valued welfare measure. They are known to have saved hundreds from going hungry.

With the number of wards in Bengaluru rising to 400 recently, the over a hundred new Indira Canteens will need to be set up soon to serve every ward. This phase of expanding the number of canteens is an opportunity to review this experiment so far and remedy its problems: the short operating hours – two hours per meal time – being one of them.

At the time the current state government assumed office, I wrote here urging it to enforce mandatory rainwater harvesting in buildings on plots measuring 60 x 40 feet and above. I also suggested that the social science textbooks make high school students aware of the deadly problem of fake news and enable them to shun it. I would like to bring these two issues to the table once again.

Happy New Year!

THAT BLIND RHODES SCHOLAR

A middle road to AI copyright

The tussle between law and technology is hardly new. Generative artificial intelligence has brought this conflict into everyday life: when an AI tool writes a news-style summary in seconds, mimics a well-known author's voice, or generates artwork strikingly similar to an illustrator's style, a question arises: whose creativity is being used and who should be paid for it? Copyright law, long tasked with balancing innovation and incentive, now finds itself at the centre of a debate that affects not just lawyers and technologists, but journalists, artists, musicians, and ordinary users.

AI systems are trained on vast quantities of text, images, music, and audiovisual works; much of it is protected by copyright. At the same time, these systems promise immense public benefits, from productivity gains to breakthroughs in healthcare, education, and scientific research. The interaction of AI and copyright is thus not a niche legal dispute, but a structural policy question with implications for India's creative economy, its technology sector, and its broader developmental goals.

News content created by journalists allegedly finds its way into AI training pipelines without permission or compensation. It is against this backdrop that the Working Paper on Generative AI and Copyright, released on December 8, 2025, by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), deserves close attention. Rather than waiting for judicial outcomes to crystallise the law through piecemeal decisions, it represents a bold and thoughtful attempt to seize the policy moment.

The working paper is aimed at facilitating a framework that safeguards the rights of content creators while enabling responsible generative AI innovation and equitable access to technology. It identifies two core problem areas. The first concerns the use of copyrighted material as input – the legal and policy questions surrounding the training of AI systems on protected works. The second relates to copyright claims over AI-generated output, including questions of authorship, originality, moral rights, and liability. Part I of the paper focuses on the input side, recognising that unless training practices are addressed, downstream questions about output will remain unresolved.

Rahul Bajaj
is a practising lawyer with expertise in disability rights and IP law, and is co-founder of Mission Accessibility. He wears more hats than he can himself sometimes count
@rahul400

The paper comprehensively surveys developments across jurisdictions, examines emerging judicial thinking, and evaluates multiple regulatory models before arriving at its recommendations. It explicitly rejects voluntary licensing as the primary solution. This model, the committee notes, suffers from serious flaws: reluctance of right-holders to transact with AI developers, prohibitively high transaction costs, fragmented negotiations across sectors, and the likelihood that only well-resourced incumbents would benefit. More worryingly, insufficient access to diverse training data could result in biased or low-quality AI systems, while erecting entry barriers for startups and MSMEs.

Equally significant is the rejection of a text and data mining (TDM) exception with an opt-out regime. This approach would allow AI developers to freely use copyrighted works for training unless a rights-holder explicitly opts out. The committee's objections are grounded in practical reality. If large numbers of creators opt out, data availability shrinks, degrading AI quality. If they do not, due to lack of awareness, resources or technical capacity, they receive no compensation. Implementing a meaningful opt-out system would require standardised, machine-readable notices across platforms, raising serious compliance and enforcement challenges.

The committee recommends a statutory licensing framework, anchored in the principle of "one nation, one licence, one payment". A new body, the Copyright Royalties Collective for AI Training (CRCAT), would function as a central entity, with copyright societies among its members. It would collect royalties from AI developers based on rates fixed by a government-appointed committee and distribute them to rights-holders.

Crucially, the paper proposes a revenue-share model, rather than upfront licensing fees. Payments, a percentage of the gross global revenue earned from the commercialisation of AI systems trained on copyrighted content, would arise only once revenue is generated. This, the committee argues, lowers entry barriers for innovation and aligns remuneration with economic benefit.

The DPIIT working paper is nuanced, comprehensive, and balanced. While recognising that neither creators nor innovators can be sacrificed at the altar of the other, it acknowledges that waiting indefinitely for courts to resolve these questions risks creating an uncertain regulatory environment. There are questions about the calibration of royalty rates and the governance of CRCAT, but India needs a starting point. This paper provides one that is principled, pragmatic, and rooted in Indian realities.

In a world where machines increasingly learn from us, the challenge is not to stop them from learning, but to ensure that human creativity continues to matter and to be valued in the process.

DHARMA

Islam in Bengal and Odisha is not the Islam of Gujarat

Devdutt Pattanaik
works with gods and demons who churn nectar from the ocean of Indian, Chinese, Islamic, Christian, even secular mythologies

As per Sanatani lore, Islam came to India, smashing the Somnath temple of Gujarat. They forget to mention that the Jagannath temple of Odisha, attacked over eighteen times, remained resilient and continues to stand tall. Different parts of India responded differently to Islam. At the time of India's Partition, Bengali-speaking regions had over 50% Muslim population, while Odia-speaking regions had less than 5%.

The arrival of Islam in the mainland had much to do with horses. When the horse traders from Afghanistan and Iran entered India, they realised that many of the kings of India were rather weak and it was easy to take over their kingdoms. One such case happened in 1202 AD; an Afghan rode into the Bengal city of Nadia, which was the seat of a local Maharaj. Before the Hindu king realised what was happening, the horse riders, instead of selling horses, which was a regular sight in the market, pulled out their swords, entered the king's palace and occupied it. The horse dealer became the Sultan of Bengal, Muhammad Bakhti Arkhalji, who proceeded to plunder the Nalanda University in Bihar. Fearing that the Delhi sultans would block his access to horses from the northwest, he invaded Assam to ensure access to ponies from Tibet. So as early as 800 years ago, horse riders entered Bengal and established the Islamic rule.

Bengal at that time was ruled by the Hindu Sena kings who had replaced the Buddhist Pala kings. Local narratives indicate that many peasant and subaltern communities saw the end of Sena rule as liberating. The *Mangal Kavyas* were written between the 13th and the 18th century and in one of these, known as *Shunya Puran*, there is an extraordinary narrative entitled 'Niranjan-er Rushma' or 'the wrath of Lord Niranjan', which claims that Dharma from Vaikuntha, along with many Hindu deities, arrived on earth in the form of Muslim horsemen to punish exploitative Brahmin landowners and establish order. Even today, terracotta horses are given to Dharma Thakur by subaltern communities.

There is reference to King Shashank bringing Brahminism to Bengal from Kashi and Kannauj in the 6th century. Before that, Buddhists and Jains had entered this land. Most of these mainstream religions impacted only the elites and did not percolate to the lower levels of society, where people continued to follow their tribal practices and folk deities who became peculiar to Bengal, such as Mansa, Chandi, Bon-Bibi and Dakshin-rai.

There is the concept of the Charak Sannyasi in Bengal, where anybody can become Shiva for the month of Chaitra, during which people live a celibate life, do not eat meat, and live like mendicants. It's a mixture of tantric Buddhism and Shaivism, and they receive alms from people, smear their bodies with ash and on the final day, attach iron hooks to their backs and spin around the Charak pole. During this time, anybody from any caste becomes Shiva, and even the Brahmins touch their feet. Hook swinging is popular; piercing the cheek and the tongue with sharp iron rods is also popular. These are clearly local folk practices; tribal practices seen in many parts of India have nothing to do with Brahmin *dharma-shastra*.

Muslim contact with Odisha started after Bengal was conquered. The Ganga and Gajapati kings fiercely resisted Muslim invasions. They invented rites like *navakalebara*, based on various old Tantrik Buddhist and tribal rituals that allowed the temple deity to be 'reborn' despite desecration. And so, Jagannath still stands tall, despite several brutal attacks. Odisha fell to Afghan rulers only when it had been weakened by attacks by the Hindu Vijayanagara kings in the 16th century. This was followed by Mughal rule, Maratha rule, and British rule.

Islamic influence was weak. Persian (Mughal) inscriptions appear only in the 17th century in Cuttack, indicating the building of mosques. There is one inscription from the Afghan period, in 1587, about a well dug by a local Afghan warlord.

Even though Odisha is close to Bengal, it is clear that while Bengal had a very strong Muslim rule, the Mahanadi region did not. At first, the kings fiercely resisted Islamic rule, and later, ritual innovations were used to keep Hinduism thriving. By paying a hefty pilgrim tax, the local priests ensured the Mughal governors left them alone. Probably to increase the pilgrim tax revenue, a Mughal highway was built that connected Odisha through Bengal to Vrindavan. It is through this path that the Chaitanya cult spread rapidly towards the Gangetic Plain.

Odisha's Brahmins, perhaps, were more innovative than Bengal's Brahmins, and both were clearly more influential than Gujarat's Brahmins. This may explain the differences in response to Islam in respective geographies.

DECCAN HERALD
Sunday
January 4, 2026

The Great January MATH

As New Year diets restart and (guilt-laden) fitness chatter dominates conversations, Barkha Kumari takes a hard look at the science behind calories — why metabolism, stress, and food quality matter more, who should count, and what actually delivers lasting fat loss

The past year's indulgences are officially forgiven and declared over. January is redemption time. Gym classes are booked at a discount, because 'tis the season. Salad bowl subscriptions may burn more money than fat, but one must try. The white pantry is stocked with brown rice, brown bread, brown sugar, and multigrain products. Mornings will begin with anti-inflammatory drinks. Vision boards will become the voice of conscience, reminding us that weight loss is 90% mindset. Nights will end watching body transformation reels, for motivation or guilt, it's hard to tell.

At the centre of this reset, earnest, absurd, and exhausting, sit calories. A unit of energy.

Invented as a unit of heat energy, it now dictates what people eat, how they feel, and what discipline looks like. And like Bridget Jones, they convince themselves that if they count calories carefully enough this time, their body will finally change.

However, experts based in Bengaluru say the 'calories in, calories out' approach isn't straightforward. Nor is it sustainable, as the New Year's *josh* often fizzles at that tempting scoop of ice cream. If you want results that last, keep it old-school: eat well-rounded meals, move more, get enough sleep, and drink plenty of water.

Is calories in, calories out 'legit'?

Rebecca Kuriyan Raj, professor and head of the division of nutrition at a research institute, says weight management is multifactorial. At its simplest, eat as many calories as you burn, and your weight stays steady. Eat more than you burn, and you gain. Burn more than you eat, and you lose weight. The catch? People aren't great at tracking what they eat.

There's often a 30% error in dietary recall, including both overestimation and underestimation. Also, remember that 50-60% of the calories you burn are used to fuel your body at rest — for breathing, circulating blood, repairing cells, and maintaining body temperature. This is called your Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR). BMR is fairly constant, so to create a calorie deficit, you need to eat less or move more, she says.

According to dietitian Edwina, your overall calorie-burning ability, or metabolism, can vary widely based on factors like age, gender, physical activity, and even weather. Conditions such as hypothyroidism or PCOD, or the use of steroids, can affect muscle mass, which in turn can lower metabolism. The gut microbiome may also influence appetite hormones and the energy we burn during weight training, but she says larger studies are needed to confirm these theories.

Sometimes, managing blood sugar and getting enough sleep can achieve what calorie tracking alone cannot, says sports nutritionist Deepika Vasudevan. "In my practice, I have seen women with pre-diabetes or insulin resistance (where food isn't fully utilised) lose weight simply by eating balanced meals and managing stress. They also woke up feeling fresh and energetic," she adds.

According to Anura V Kurpad, from the physiology department of a medical college, India needs more research to accurately measure activity-related energy expenditure (the amount of energy burned by the human body). He poses a simple question: "When someone goes for a run, do they negate it by being sedentary (for the rest of the day) because they feel they have 'done their bit'?"

Who should not count calories?

"Not children or teenagers, but adults in their 20s and beyond can. And certainly not anyone struggling with eating disorders like bulimia," says Deepika. Edwina says during illness, skip the calorie count because your body needs fuel to heal.

Gautham Sangappa, director of a fitness academy, says counting calories depends on your goal. "For athletes, it's unavoidable. Overeating or undereating, the quality of calories, and even when they eat, can show up in their very next training session. It is tied to their performance outcome." But for the average person, this level of hair-splitting isn't necessary, except for those hitting repeated fat-loss plateaus or those recovering from disordered eating patterns.

Are all calories the same?

Whether 100 calories come from 11 gm of fat or 25 gm of carbs, the number is the same. "But if you look only at numbers, you can't plan a balanced diet," says Edwina. The body is a complex machine that needs macronutrients (carbs, proteins, and fats) and micronutrients like vitamins and minerals in the right balance to perform optimally and maintain good body composition.

Edwina says that rather than just chasing calorie counts, the focus should be on the nutritive value of food. "For example, 15 gm of nuts provides about 80 calories. But it also provides 7 gm of essential fats, which can supplement the body's requirement." She adds that what constitutes a balanced diet varies depending on individual needs and health conditions.

Rebecca reminds us that we are living in an era of calorie-dense packaged foods. A 50 gm apple contains about 100 calories and is rich in vitamins, potassium and fibre, while a 50 gm pack of potato chips packs nearly 250 calories along with unhealthy fats. An apple, with its fibre and water content, keeps you full longer, whereas ultra-processed chips are absorbed quickly and encourage overeating.

Sangappa reiterates that the source matters and adds, "If you are waking up tired despite meeting your calorie intake, you could be low on iron or calcium."

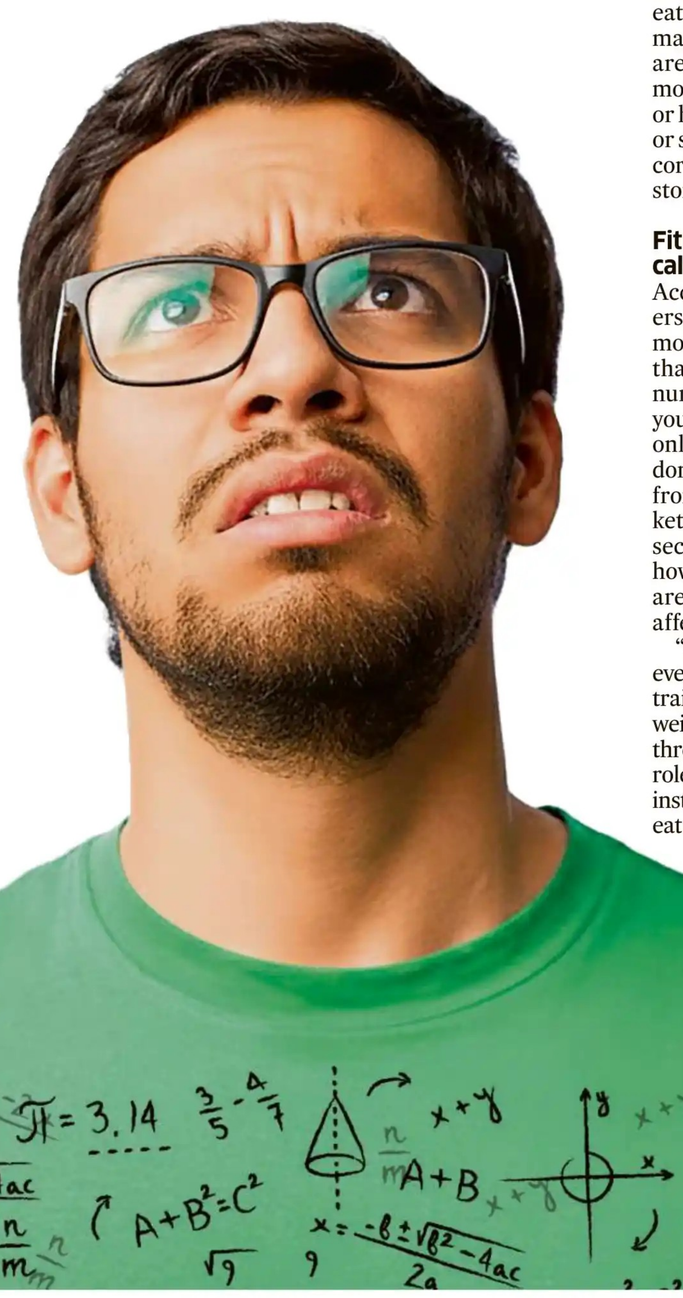
Fat or muscle loss?

What you exercise and what you eat afterwards decide what you lose; stubborn fat or precious muscle. Deepika shares, "Brisk walking actively burns calories and fat. Cardio, like running or dancing, can burn muscle. But if you follow it with protein-packed paneer bhurji rather than a masala dosa, your body is more likely to lose fat than muscle. Strength training builds muscle, which helps burn calories at rest."

Carbohydrate conundrum

According to Rebecca, carbs have always made up 60-70% of the Indian diet. Much of this came from complex carbs with high fibre content. But now, we are eating bigger portions, calorie-dense foods, and more refined carbs. In an unpublished study at her institute, they tried cutting carbs by 20% in a typical diet to see its effect on weight maintenance. Those who stuck to it did see positive results.

Kurpad elaborates on the ongoing debate about whether body weight can be manipulated by diet composition — low carbs versus low fat — rather than by total energy (calorie) intake. This is known as the Carbohydrate-Insulin Model (CIM) versus the Energy Balance Model (EBM). The CIM suggests that low-carb diets trigger less insulin than low-fat (high-carb) diets. Since insulin promotes fat storage, lower insulin levels may make it easier to burn fat. Low-carb diets also increase energy expenditure. The EBM, however, emphasises that the basic rule still applies: energy intake must match energy needs — eat more than you burn, and you gain weight; consume less, and you lose weight.



Calorie deficit in women

In her practice, Deepika often sees women in their mid-20s and above, mostly from upper-middle-class families, asking for calorie-deficient diets without realising they are already undereating. "Adult Indian women should eat 1,600-1,800 calories a day, but many barely reach 1,200-1,400, which are toddler portions," she says. In the morning rush to send kids to school or head to work, many skip breakfast or survive on coffee. This triggers a cortisol spike that can lead to more fat storage later in the day.

Fitness tracker says I burned 100 calories. Did I?

According to Sangappa, fitness trackers can have a margin of error of 10% or more. They might log 500 steps fewer than you actually take. But even so, the numbers can motivate you to reach your target. The gap is that trackers only measure calories you 'burn'. They don't automatically track what you eat, from the oil you cook with to the mayo, ketchup, and chutney you go back for seconds. They also don't account for how well you rest, how hydrated you are, or your life stressors. All of these affect hitting a calorie deficit.

"One of my female clients was doing everything right — 5 km runs, resistance training, cardio. But she started gaining weight. It turned out her stress levels were through the roof. She was in a managerial role and barely slept five hours a night. So instead of cutting calories, we asked her to eat a little more, rest properly, and reduce workouts. Her fat levels came down," he says.

Deepika says calorie burn is unique to each person, but trackers rely on generalised formulas based on heart rate, during activity and at rest, of an average individual. That's why they can't capture the full complexity of each body.

Are calories on food labels accurate?

Edwina says that when foods are lab-tested, the numbers are mostly reliable. However, she urges caution with zero-calorie drinks. The artificial sweeteners they contain aren't calorie-free in effect, and have been shown to upset gut health or spike blood sugar. But labelled calories may not always equal calories absorbed. A 2021 University of Toronto study found that about 20% of the calories in almonds, mainly from fat, went unabsorbed, resulting in 2% lower energy intake overall.

How quickly can I slim down without starving myself?

According to Sangappa, losing 10 kg in a month is possible, but most of that would be water or glycogen (stored sugar) loss, or even muscle loss. Real fat loss takes time. A sustainable approach typically involves a daily calorie deficit of 200-500 calories. "This translates to about 0.5 to 1.5 kg of fat loss per month. The initial weeks may show faster scale movement due to water loss, but the rate naturally slows as the body adapts, and you will need to step up your workouts," he explains. A combination of resistance training, cardio, and proper rest boosts metabolism and lets you steadily achieve a 10 kg loss over 6 to 12 months. He says every January, sign-ups at his academy spike by 50%. Most newcomers dream of shedding 10 kg in two months, but 8 out of 10 quit within a fortnight!

When did we begin to count calories?

Calorie counting began in the 19th century on factory floors, not in dieting culture. With industrialisation, scientists began studying how human energy expenditure related to work output. In Germany, fatigue research became part of managerial science, while in the US, chemist Wilbur Olin Atwater calculated the calories bricklayers needed to sustain hard labour. Employers used these findings to maximise productivity at minimal cost.

The term "calorie" initially stayed within laboratories. When it entered public life during World War I, it caused quite a bit of confusion, but soon became a tool for food rationing. The US Food Administration urged civilians to limit calorie intake to conserve food for soldiers, who received higher rations. Restaurants even displayed calorie counts as a patriotic act.

Calories gained popular attention in 1918 with Diet & Health, a bestselling weight-loss book by physician Lulu Hunt Peters. She promoted calorie counting for weight loss, teaching people to think of food as numbers and self-control as virtue, reflecting changing beauty ideals favouring thinness. In the 1980s, calorie counting re-emerged amid rising obesity linked to industrialised, energy-dense foods.

The debate swung between personal responsibility and biological causes of weight gain. Appetite-suppressing drugs and calorie restriction both failed long-term, as bodies adapt by conserving energy.

Know the difference!

In the world of food and fitness, a calorie actually means a kilocalorie (that's 1,000 calories). It is also called a large calorie, food calorie, dietary calorie, or kilogram calorie, and it measures the heat required to raise 1 kg of water by 1°C.

The small calorie is used in chemistry and physics, and is a measure of the heat needed to raise 1 gm of water by 1°C. To distinguish, the food calorie is sometimes written as kcal or Cal (uppercase), while the scientific calorie is written as cal (lowercase).

Beyond pop culture

A calorie is not just the number on the back of a chips packet, what you rack up on a fitness tracker after 10,000 steps, or the daily target your dietician asks you to meet. It is also an invisible force shaping politics, economics, labour, culture, and memory.

'Calorie', **a year-long exhibition and engagement at Science Gallery Bengaluru**, strips the food on our plates down to its ground realities. Why should we care? Because, as the exhibition notes, "the desire to eat and satiate hunger drives us from the moment we are born".

The exhibition nudges us to think about how palm oil is driving deforestation and displacement, how famine, war, and caste have shaped culinary practices, and how Britain's bid to break China's monopoly made tea an obsession in India.

For this writer, one of the most revealing sections is the photo series 'What I Eat: Around the World in 80 Diets'. Individuals from different countries are pictured alongside a typical day's worth of food. Their calorie counts vary: a young Internet gamer in China consumes 1,600 kcal, a Sudanese refugee and an unemployed American at 2,300 kcal each, a brewmaster in Germany at 2,700 kcal, a woman farmer from Ecuador at 3,800 kcal, and a yak herder in Tibet at 5,600 kcal. The images bring into focus how personal dietary choices are often at odds with ideal prescriptions of what is considered "healthy" or "adequate", shaped instead by access, work, lifestyle, environment, and climate.

The exhibition also makes us reflect on our relationship with our bodies. In 'Stuff Change', visitors can hear the rumble of the gut through an inflatable sculpture. But these 'embarrassing' sounds are a sign that the body is at work, digesting food and extracting the energy (calories) that fuel us.

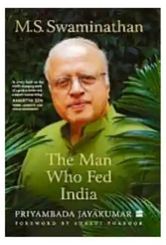
How many calories do you need?

Adult men typically need between 2,110 kcal (sedentary) and 3,470 kcal (heavy work), while women require 1,660 kcal and 2,720 kcal. Rural populations are allotted slightly more calories (around 2,400 kcal) due to higher physical activity compared with urban areas (about 2,100 kcal). The 2024 ICMR-NIN dietary guidelines recommend a balanced diet with 50-55% of calories from carbohydrates, 10-15% from proteins, and 20-30% from fats. According to their 'My Plate for the Day' guideline, half of your plate should have fruits, vegetables, and tubers, a quarter of cereals and millets, another quarter of pulses, flesh foods, eggs, nuts, or dairy, plus oils and spices.

A lucid, timely biography of M S Swaminathan, this book also shows how moral conviction and bold policy redefined Indian agriculture, writes Uma Mahadevan Dasgupta

Less talk, more GRAIN

Swaminathan ensured that hunger would never again define India's destiny.



M S SWAMINATHAN: THE MAN WHO FED INDIA
Priyambada Jayakumar
Harper, pp 324, Rs 799

If the economist Amartya Sen showed that democracies avert famines but can live with chronic hunger, it was the plant geneticist M S Swaminathan who found a scientific and practical solution to that hunger. Both thinkers were influenced in their youth by the devastating moral catastrophe of the Bengal Famine of 1943 that claimed millions of lives.

"To those who are hungry, God can only appear in the form of bread," said Mahatma Gandhi at Noakhali. Swaminathan made it his life's mission to ensure that no one, anywhere, would go hungry.

Priyambada Jayakumar's biography appears in the centenary year of the agricultural scientist. When parts of the world again face drought, desertification, geopolitical food insecurity, and agrarian distress, Swaminathan's work speaks powerfully to the need for science and policy to work with ethical purpose to protect the most vulnerable.

Born in 1925, Swaminathan had been expected to study medicine like his father. His Gandhian convictions and his desire to serve the disadvantaged motivated him to study agricultural science, a field that could save millions from the indignity of hunger and starvation. After research in Holland, Cambridge, and the United States, he rejected offers of a tenured faculty position and a lucrative corporate job designing a superior potato chip. He returned to India.

Jawaharlal Nehru had declared, "Everything else can wait, but not agriculture" — even urging Indians to blend sweet potatoes with scarce wheat in rotis. Lal Bahadur Shastri issued the call "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan," urging Indians to give up one meal weekly to help the nation at a time of crisis. Farm productivity was central not only to the economy but also to resolving the urgent problem of food insecurity itself.

Early attempts to improve yields came up repeatedly against a challenge: as grains grew heavier, the slender stalks broke under their own weight. The search began for shorter, sturdier, "dwarf" varieties. A visiting Japanese scientist told Swaminathan about a promising new hybrid variety in the United States. When the Indian researcher reached out, the American scientist suggested that Norman Borlaug's dwarf varieties developed in Mexico might be better suited to Indian conditions. Swaminathan had already met Borlaug during his postdoctoral research in the United States. They reconnected; after a prolonged bureaucratic delay, Borlaug was invited to visit India. History followed.

Defying the dire Malthusian predictions of Paul Ehrlich and William and Paul Paddock, Swaminathan introduced Borlaug's high-yielding Mexican dwarf varieties of wheat to Indian soil. It was not a straightforward task. It took months of persuasion to convince the first farmer, a smallholder in Jaunti, to agree to try out the new seeds. What convinced him was Swaminathan's personal investment in the project: for months, he had been spending his Sundays and public holidays in the farmers' fields. The scientist's sincerity earned the farmers' trust.

At a time when the nation's foreign exchange reserves were critically low, India imported 18,000 tonnes of seeds from Mexico at a substantial cost of Rs 5 crore. It was the largest seed shipment in history.

What followed the sowing of the seeds was revolutionary. The harvest was beyond bountiful. Schools were closed early for the summer so that grain could be stored in empty classrooms. Cinemas and train wagons overflowed.

Crop yields surged, feeding the nation and lifting countless small-holder farmers out of poverty. At a period when foodgrains were used as an instrument of foreign policy, India was finally free of humiliating "ship-to-mouth" dependency on American Public Law (PL) 480 shipments. Swaminathan had ensured a peaceful Green Revolution in India.

C Subramanian was Minister for Food and Agriculture; B Sivaraman was Agriculture Secretary. Prime Ministers Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi supported the bold vision of food security for the nation. This extraordinary outcome took place at the intersection of sound science, courageous policy, and the intrepid determination of farmers. Hunger would never again define India's destiny.

The Green Revolution was the beginning of a new era in agriculture. As Director General of the International Rice Research Institute, Swaminathan continued to help nations achieve food security, with dramatic results. Large swathes of Asia began to heal from painful histories of colonial exploitation, conflict, and genocide.

When the Green Revolution later revealed ecological and regional imbalances, Swaminathan himself was among the first to recognise these limits, prompting his advocacy for ecologically responsible, equitable, and sustainable practices for an 'Evergreen Revolution.'

In Jayakumar's retelling of Swaminathan's life, these acts emerge not as isolated examples of genius, but as expressions of a consistent moral vision: a commitment to academic excellence, nation-building, and public policy; science as a collaborative process, based on building bridges across the world, with non-hierarchical lab-to-land and land-to-lab interactions; and a steadfast conviction that science must promote peace, equity, and sustainability. Through leadership at multiple international organisations, he embodied a belief that the world is one.

Swaminathan won innumerable awards, including the Ramon Magsaysay Award and the first World Food Prize. In keeping with the Gandhian concept of trusteeship, he donated the award money to causes such as the education of migrant children and setting up a participatory research foundation.

Swaminathan saw small and marginal holders not as passive recipients of innovation, but as co-creators of knowledge. He recognised and valued their practical skills, dignity, and aspirations. As Chair of the National Commission on Farmers, he argued for farmers' welfare not only as an economic imperative but also as a moral one.

Swaminathan was a lifelong follower of Gandhi. As a young university student, he had walked silently in the Mahatma's funeral procession on the streets of Delhi, with countless other mourners. Those quiet moments were a prelude to a life devoted to service rather than self — and a belief that a nation's dignity begins with the certainty that its people can eat.

The reviewer is the Development Commissioner, Government of Karnataka.

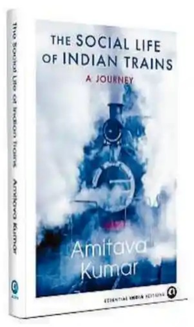
A book on rails that often derails

Here's a meditation on Indian railways that blends insight and nostalgia, but falters in personal narrative and emotional balance, writes Nimesh Ved

Amitava Kumar takes us on a journey with trains — a journey in which he touches upon history, literature and personal experiences. He sets the tone in a manner befitting the book: "the railway lines that criss-cross the country, and are longer even than our majestic rivers, bind the landscape into a whole and give it a sense of a nation."

He has us revisit classics like Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*, Gulzar's *Raavi Paar*, Kamal Amrohi's *Pakeezah*, Dushyant Kumar's *Tu kisi rail si guzarti hai*, Bhisham Sahni's *Amritsar Aa Gaya Hai*, and others. With a keen eye, comfort in multiple languages, and dexterity with words, he elucidates the role of trains in these poems, movies and books — and, as a corollary, in our lives. He does this in a manner that reminds readers of what they have read, heard and seen about trains. Incidentally, I read this book at a time when Ramesh Sippy's *Sholay* — a classic that begins with a train sequence — was re-released.

He is in his element when he walks us through the history of railways in our country; the book is part of the Essential India Editions. He tells us, quoting references, how the railways primarily came into existence to help the British strengthen their empire —"mobilisation of troops", "construction of irrigation canals", "improving internal communications" and "movement of raw materials like coal and cotton". He also touches upon the impact of railways on changes in cropping patterns (and their consequences), and on Partition (and its memories).



THE SOCIAL LIFE OF INDIAN TRAINS
Amitava Kumar
Aleph, pp 142, Rs 399

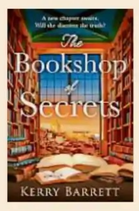
It is when he talks about his own experiences on trains that he falters. When he conveys "the mad idea of taking the Himsagar Express", or refers to the feeling in an air-conditioned apartment as "squalid claustrophobia", or states that he prefers the inconvenience and discomfort of a toy-train journey to "the bland gifts of club level travel", or is elated that "my journey is coming to an end", readers wonder why he took up writing a book on railways at all. And when he compares a voluntarily undertaken rail journey, in an air-conditioned compartment, with the lives of women behind bars, one is not sure whether this is his sense of humour or a lack of sensitivity.

He also shares snippets from his notes from a while ago. Some of his observations — such as passengers humming when their destinations are near— take readers back to their own experiences with trains. When he describes seeing a train come to a halt only to enable passengers to board, I was reminded of encountering a similarly endearing moment while travelling on the Kangra Valley Railway. He uses trains to underscore societal changes over time but clearly appears out of depth when talking about the haves and the have-nots in society. And, for some reason, throughout the book—be it history, news or otherwise—he chooses to focus on the sad rather than the happy.

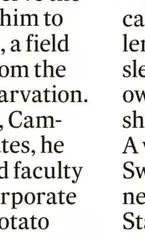
He is honest about his biases and prejudices and is direct. I was relieved that someone finally wrote that after all the cleaning in railway coaches, the trash is simply dumped out of the doors of running trains. He also reminds us, multiple times, that he is from Bihar and well-versed in its lingua franca. There appears to be little point, though, in the repeated references to the prime minister and right-wing-led actions. He quotes the likes of Paul Theroux. The quote that stood out for me, however, was by Malcolm Harper and Lalitha Iyer: "If you want to get away, to be free, to see life beyond the narrow confines of a small community, or merely to hide and disappear into the masses of India, you take the train." He also has an interesting choice of words — mofussil, *bastees*, *gamchha* and *rajya*, among others. The book, though, despite all of this, has very little that is new or surprising.

I agree with the author when he says that railways are that rare factor unifying us, common to us all. I would add that they are perhaps the only microcosm that represents our country with all its colours, sounds and smells. Reading —and rereading — this book also taught me that perhaps writing about trains is, in some ways, like writing about love; chances are high that we would have experienced it differently.

BOOKRACK



THE BOOKSHOP OF SECRETS
Kerry Barrett
Harper, pp 336, Rs 499
Set in wartime Lisbon, this atmospheric historical novel follows a young woman drawn into a mysterious bookshop with dangerous secrets. Featuring espionage, romance, and an irresistible setting, it's perfect for readers who love immersive, page-turning historical fiction.



COLOUR MY GRAVE PURPLE
Shehnab Sahin
Niyogi, pp 258, Rs 695
This is an unusual anthology of historical fiction from Assam, which spans a century of the Northeastern state's colourful past, evoking a vivid journey from the 1850s to the 2000s.

THE MAN FROM THE TIME MACHINE
Hanif Hurairah
EkamFolks, pp 268, Rs 399
This inspirational success story—reminiscent of timeless works like The Alchemist—is more than just a tale. It is the story of your success! Are you ready to see it unfold?

WINDOW WITH A TRAIN ATTACHED
C P Surendran
SpeakingTiger, pp 152, Rs 399
These poems explore the unsettling truth that we cannot fully possess our lives, even as we live them, except perhaps through their recreation in art.

KAAYAA

Dr Kaginale and N Shankaran (translator)
Vintage, pp 336, Rs 599
A novel translated from Kannada, mostly set in the United States, Kaayaa (which translates to 'body') touches upon various contemporary themes, from sexuality and disease to politics and marriage.

Stepping into the gig machine

This erudite work is a clear-eyed account of South Asia's gig economy, revealing how digital convenience is built on unseen labour, says Stanley Carvalho

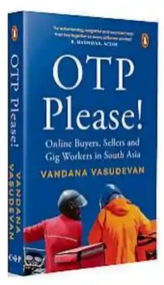
A delivery executive zooms across the road to reach his destination in Bengaluru. (DH FILE PHOTO)

Since the pandemic, ordering online has slipped effortlessly into the rhythms of everyday life. Not just food or groceries, but house cleaning, body massages, airport drops and office commutes are now summoned with a few taps on a smartphone. Convenience has become habitual, almost invisible.

Yet, as consumers — the self-styled "prevailing gods of the e-commerce ecosystem"— we rarely pause to consider what lies beneath the surface of this frictionless world: the labour, risk and uncertainty that power the swift delivery of goods and services.

In her exhaustively researched book OTP Please, Vandana Vasudevan turns the spotlight on the people who inhabit the gig economy — sellers, workers and consumers — across India and South Asia. Drawing on a year-long investigation and hundreds of interviews, she captures a society in the midst of a quiet but profound transformation. Technology, she observes, is reshaping how we buy, eat, travel, work and sell, altering not just markets but the emotional fabric of everyday life.

What distinguishes OTP Please is its unwavering focus on the human element. At its heart are gig workers who labour for long hours under precarious conditions so that the wheels of digital commerce keep turning. Vasudevan structures her narrative around emotions that cut across borders and job descriptions — Pleasure, Guilt, Gratitude, Anger, Freedom, Oppression, Anxiety, Isolation and Courage. This inventive framework allows her to explore the gig economy not as an abstract system, but as a lived experience shaped by hope, frustration and resilience.



OTP PLEASE!
Vandana Vasudevan
Penguin, pp 384, Rs 399

One might wonder why the book avoids a country-by-country structure. Vasudevan explains that the similarities were too striking to ignore. Whether in India, Bangladesh or Sri Lanka, the stories echoed one another so closely that they demanded to be woven together, revealing a shared regional reality rather than isolated national ones.

Her canvas is expansive and often unsettling. We see global e-commerce giants deploying clever strategies that quietly erode local businesses; small sellers squeezed by shrinking margins on digital platforms; cab drivers and delivery riders clocking punishing hours, navigating opaque algorithms while risking life and limb. There are women in beauty services dealing with rude and demanding customers, and warehouse workers trudging up and down multiple floors without fans, hauling trolleys to fulfil online orders. These are lives largely invisible to the end user, yet central to the promise of instant gratification.

One of the book's most revealing insights concerns income decline as the principal source of anger among gig workers in India — the largest market examined. High platform commissions, rising fuel costs, oversupply of labour and mounting debt have pushed many into distress. For those who entered the sector with high hopes, the eventual disillusionment cuts deep, leaving a lingering sense of betrayal.

In the chapter on 'Anger', Vasudevan also turns her attention to the app itself — the backbone of the gig economy. She documents how systems fail at critical moments, a frustration familiar to most users. Drawing an unexpected parallel with NASA's Mars Climate Orbiter disaster, she reminds readers that even the most advanced technologies are fallible, their consequences magnified when human livelihoods depend on them.

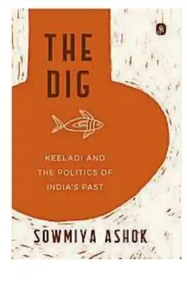
Yet OTP Please is careful not to paint the gig economy in monochrome. Vasudevan records stories of empowerment and possibility. Across South Asia, new forms of work have given many women financial independence and agency. For people with physical disabilities, ride-hailing apps have opened up mobility and autonomy. The elderly and those with limited movement now travel with greater ease, avoiding chaotic traffic and unsafe footpaths.

Still, the book does not shy away from the hidden costs of this "easy living". One of the most corrosive effects, Vasudevan pinpoints, is social isolation — the quiet disappearance of everyday interactions with neighbours and local kirana stores. Add to this unhealthy routines, disrupted sleep cycles and an erosion of traditional food cultures, and the conveniences of the gig economy begin to look far less benign.

Informative yet intimate, anecdotal yet balanced, Vasudevan's reportage illuminates the digital age we inhabit: the logic of algorithms, the 'atomisation' of workers, Gen Z's YOLO-driven consumption patterns, and phenomena like nocturnal snacking enabled by late-night delivery apps.

In a particularly poignant passage, she reflects on how work once meant belonging — to an office or factory alive with human exchange. Gig work dismantles this idea, replacing it with solitude and placelessness. Workers belong everywhere and nowhere at once. This, Vasudevan suggests, is the brave new world millions are being asked to adapt to — one OTP at a time.

READ OF THE WEEK



Since its discovery in 2014, the Keeladi excavation has become one of India's most contested digs, hailed by some as proof of an urban civilisation in South India and dismissed by others as political mythmaking.

Journalist Sowmiya Ashok traces the serendipitous discovery of this ancient settlement and the political storm it set off. Her journey takes her from the earliest Iron Age sites in Tamil Nadu to the Harappan site of Rakhigarhi in Haryana and the lost port of Muziris in Kerala. Along the way, she chats with archaeologists while sweating under the scorching sun, clings to rickety platforms at a roaring jallikattu arena, and even tastes ancient pottery at an excavation site. Blending sharp insight with humour, The Dig reveals how political battles over science and history continue to shape our understanding of India's past.

Sowmiya Ashok is a journalist based in Chennai with over 14 years of experience. She has been a correspondent for leading Indian dailies, reporting on politics, environment, and culture. In 2019, she reported from Beijing, writing insightful pieces from China.

HE SAID/ SHE SAID *Indu Balachandran*

He JOGS, she JUGGLES

There's one thing about exercise we all know: it features in every single New Year resolution list in the world, his or hers.

Now here's something I bet you didn't know: exercise, in ancient times, was a thing only men did. At a Greek invention called a gymnasium: 'a public place for body movement and weight lifting'. The name itself comes from the word gymnos, which means naked.

Apparently men gathered in this large public hall, completely discarded their togas, rubbed their bodies with olive oil, and proceeded to lift barbells, swing clubs, punch bags, push weights and pull hamstrings — motivated by each other's glistening muscular bodies.

They also ran, jumped, threw, leapt, skipped, swam, hurdled — all in their stark gymnos barefoot state, because it was difficult to do so wearing togas, and the Greek goddess Nike hadn't yet launched her line of shoes and track pants.

Meanwhile, Greek womenfolk didn't do any exercise at all. Because they were so busy juggling their female duties all day: walking miles to village wells, pulling heavy buckets of water, carrying loads back home, running behind their kids, bending to pick discarded togas, stretching to pluck olives, and pressing to make olive oil. The men meanwhile were getting competitive, out-exercising each other, then and decided to make a big sport of it in 776, called the Olympics.

Pictures of Ancient Greece show sports like running, wrestling and discus throw, but the intriguing thing is men still ran and jumped and wrestled all completely naked (ouch). The authorities forbade married women (gynaikes) from viewing these raw displays of male beauty and talent. However, unmarried maidens (parthenos) were allowed to cheer from the sidelines.

One day, a bunch of envious sporty ladies began to wonder why on earth they too couldn't run, carry weights, and even wrestle to win prizes like the men. After all, they'd been in physical training for centuries in an occupation called housework. But it was only 1500 years later, in the 1900 Paris Olympics, that women finally got to be included in this grand sporting event.

Today, both men and women are just a short jog away from the unisex world of fitness.

Exercise enters the lexicon

'Exercise' had finally entered the world of women's vocabulary! Not just for their bodies, but their minds as well. Women fought to exercise their rights to vote, and were soon storming male bastions in their bid for emancipation. Not to mention, the ultimate male preserve: a gymnasium membership. (While wearing clothes, though).

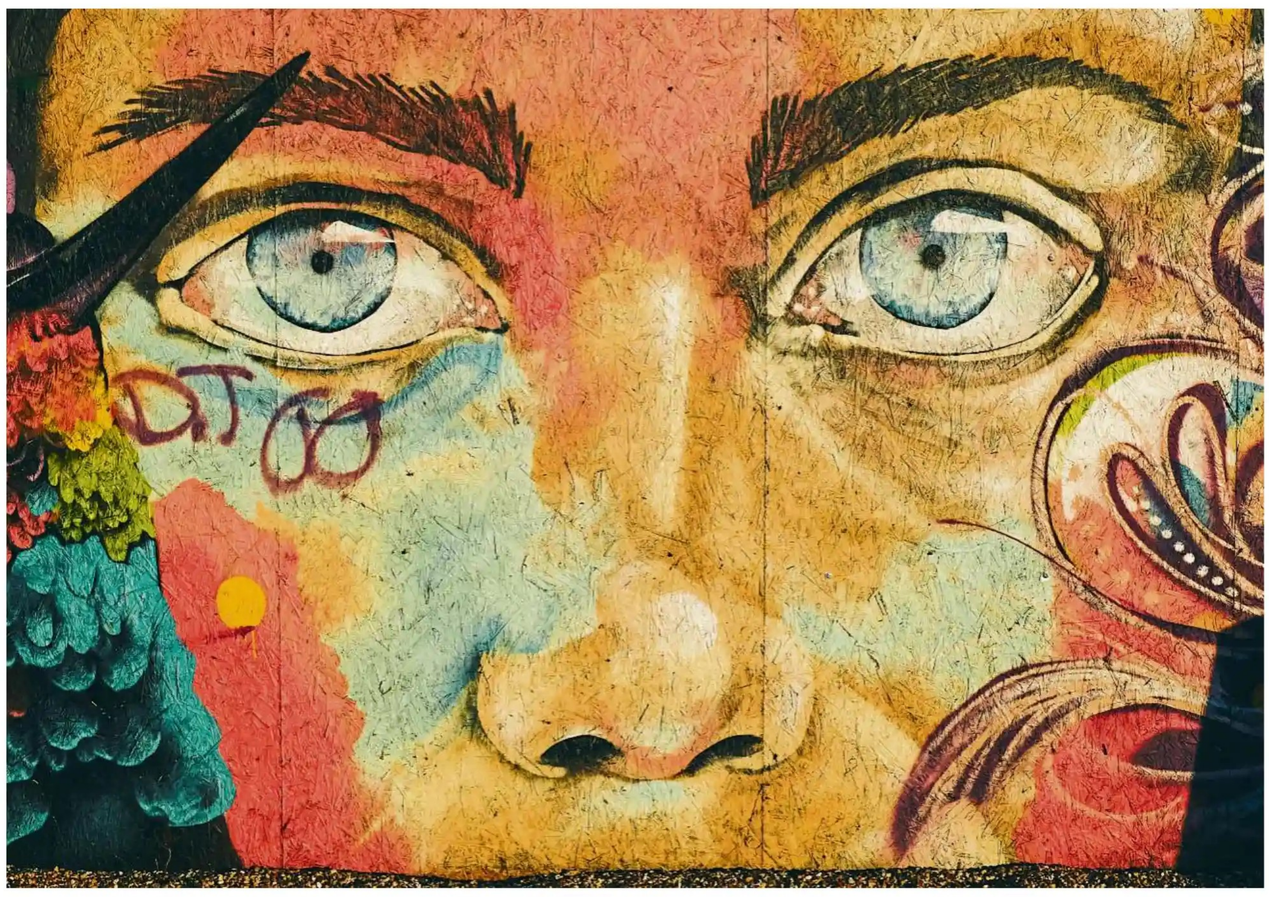
Today, both he and she are just a short jog away from this unisex world of fitness, with fancy gyms springing up in every street corner. But the one down my road is the most ingenious.

The entrance has a wide door that opens automatically, as you approach. But the exit is a narrow single heavy door that you have to push and shove and squeeze through sideways to get out. You get the subliminal message: to make it easier to leave the gym, you better get fitter and stronger and narrower with every visit.

There's also this motivating poster my trainer has put up in the reception: 'Mirrors in this gym don't lie. Fortunately, they don't laugh either.'

(He Said/She Said is a minthly column on gender issues — funny side up. Reach the author at indubee8@yahoo.co.in)

Behavioural science communicator and poet Abhisha Gulati taps into data to pen poetry that addresses gender bias and patriarchal mindsets, writes Smitha Murthy



Abhisha's poetry explores themes such as reproductive justice and domestic violence. PIC COURTESY: UNSPLASH/DAN FARRELL

For better, or verse

"Patriarchy didn't come into my life with a warning sign or buzzed into my ears with an alarm, loud and clear. It creepily seeped into my life quietly, only for me to unwrap its discomforting manifestations on my own, first through my observations of my mother as a child, soon after through my experiences firsthand."

Delhi-based poet and behavioural science communicator Abhisha Gulati has witnessed enough of patriarchy to take action against it. As a child, she would often question why her mother didn't receive the credit she deserved as the breadwinner in the family. She questioned why it was a crime to say 'periods' in front of relatives or to buy a pack of sanitary pads openly. Wearing skirts and dresses became an act of rebellion in a city where safety means women being invisible. "I questioned why conversations around gender were always so hush-hush among my family and even friends when I was a child," she reveals.

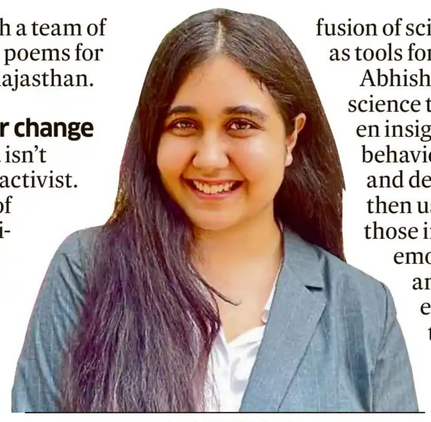
Perhaps it was the questioning. Perhaps it was the rebellion. However, with a degree in psychology and a Master's in conflict transformation and peacebuilding, much of Abhisha's work involves applying a gendered lens. "Two core values that I hold very tightly to my cerebral cortex and heart as a researcher and an evidence-informed poet are: curiosity and empathy." Those core values form the foundation of her work as an evidence-informed poet, researcher, and behavioural science communicator. "When it comes to gender, one needs to understand that whatever we think about gender and how our gender makes us think, feel, and behave is all socio-cultural and psychological in nature," Abhisha explains. A feminist lens, she continues, isn't one that defines, but rather one that understands. "It is this lens that helps me hear the unheard, see what's often unnoticed or ignored or kept seated at the corner of our world's patriarchal eye. It is this lens that helps me in my favourite poet and activist's words, to "name the nameless so it can be thought" (Audre Lord).

'Evidence-informed poetry'

Abhisha coined the term 'evidence-informed poet' to describe someone who translates academic research into more accessible, emotionally resonant poetry. "Being an evidence-informed poet is also a loaded term. It comes with responsibility. The responsibility to make sure you're delivering findings with ease, emotion, and authenticity while also taking care of the ethical considerations undertaken in all forms of science communication." An example, she says, would be collaborating with a team of researchers to write poems for women farmers in Rajasthan.

Poetry as a tool for change

In doing so, Abhisha isn't just another gender activist. She uses the power of language, poetry, science, and metaphor to drive meaningful change and conversations, even at the rural grassroots level. This is what makes her work pathbreaking: the fusion of science and poetry as tools for transformation.



Abhisha Gulati

Abhisha uses behavioural science to extract data-driven insights into human behaviour, stereotypes, and decision-making. She then uses poetry to deliver those insights through emotion, metaphor, and empathy. Together, they allow her to address gender bias, shame around female expression, and the silent weight of societal expectations. Abhisha is doing something radical in this work: she is making feminist knowledge felt.

Her poetry has been performed on over 75 Indian and international stages, including the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations. "Something that I've particularly explored in the past is why mothers experience feelings of maternal guilt, compelling them to quit their jobs after childbirth, and how poetry and behavioural science insights could be merged to bring positive change in their situations," she explains. Her poems explore reproductive justice and domestic violence, with 'Why I Want A Refund On Womanhood From God," being inspired by various studies on rapes, shaming, and domestic violence, as well as her own experience.

She's deeply aware that this work is emotionally heavy, loaded, complex, and often severely misunderstood. Abhisha draws hope from changing norms in Indian society, where she sees more women recognising the patriarchy they have internalised. She sees change — a slow ripple — but change that keeps her hopeful. There aren't grand visions, she admits. It's not about fixing the world, but about something more personal.

Travel

Slow lanes, rich rewards

Not all journeys are about ticking boxes. The new kind of traveller is motivated by the desire to grow rather than escape. Sonia Nazareth offers three destination ideas that will help you reconnect with the world more deliberately this year

A new kind of traveller is emerging, one motivated less by the desire to escape and more by the need to grow. Instead of chasing perfect beaches or the next must-post attraction, many are seeking experiences that shift something internally. These three journeys invite travellers to slow down, look inward, and reconnect with the world more deliberately.

The colourful Kreuzberg neighbourhood in Berlin. PHOTOS BY AUTHOR

For creativity: Berlin, Germany

Berlin has long served as Europe's cultural laboratory, where ideas are tested and often boldly reimagined. At its centre lies Museum Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site whose museums and galleries chart artistic and architectural history from antiquity to the present day. Yet even a brief detour from the popular hop-on hop-off bus route uncovers quieter pockets of experimentation. One such discovery occurs during an aimless walk that leads me to the Samurai Museum, a private, meticulously curated space dedicated to artefacts and art objects of the Japanese Samurai class.

Diversity drives the city's ceaseless dynamism. On a guided food tour through Kreuzberg with Italy Novik, founder of Elements of Food, the extent of that vibrancy becomes clear. With a substantial proportion of residents born abroad, the neighbourhood's culinary identity is layered. At Markthalle Neun, Italian chefs offer modern twists on heirloom recipes, while seafood stalls serve the freshest fish. The market itself is a microcosm of Berlin, experimental, and unafraid to blend traditional food ways with contemporary ideas. Between stops for traditional Kurdish fare and organic, new-wave small plates, music spills into the streets, with jazz riffs, electronic pulses, and experimental sounds. Studios and small galleries tucked into side streets pull visitors in. At one such space, I find myself wielding a paintbrush, adding a few strokes to a communal mural. In that moment, the appeal of creative cities becomes clear: participation feels natural, and curiosity is rewarded.

For the unfamiliar: Kashubia, Poland

Roughly 100 kilometres southwest of Gda sk lies Kashubia, a region known for its lakes, quiet villages, and a distinctive cultural identity that has endured for centuries. The Kashubians continue to uphold their traditions, language, dress, mythology and crafts, despite waves of historical change. The best introduction to their world is in Wdzydze Kiszewskie at the Kashubian Ethnographic Park, a 22-hectare open-air museum showcasing the architecture and rural life of old Pomerania.

Here, farmhouses, peasant homes, churches and inns have been meticulously reconstructed, their interiors arranged to reflect life in times past. Many of the buildings double as workshops. I learn from a basket weaver who fashions crepe paper into bright flowers, and explore the art of Kashubian glass painting, its motifs, techniques, and designs. A school group practising the Kashubian language adds a gentle soundtrack to the afternoon.

At Kashubia's open-air museum, historic structures have been reconstructed.

Outdoors, children walk on stilts, play traditional games, and test wooden toys. A potato festival is underway, complete with the dishing out of sizzling plates of potato pancakes. With one in hand, I drift toward a nearby lake for a quiet boat ride. Life moves unhurriedly along the banks, and the unfamiliarity, far from disorienting, proves restorative.

For nature: Maria Island, Tasmania

A 90-minute drive from Hobart to the coastal town of Triabunna, followed by a short ferry crossing, brings you to Maria Island, one of Tasmania's most immersive national parks. Car-free and largely off-grid, the island feels instantly remote: fern-draped forests, wind-sculpted beaches and dramatic coastal cliffs form a landscape shaped by millions of years. I base myself near Darlington, from where short treks lead to the island's geological wonders. If you have the stamina (and the rewards are high), you can venture on one of the island's longer bushwalks, with views of rugged headlands, ancient rock formations, and the Painted Cliffs. Bands of ochre, gold and russet swirl through the sandstone of these cliffs like frozen brushstrokes.

Painted cliffs of Tasmania.

The old convict settlement at Darlington offers a peek into Australia's most intact probation station. It preserves insights into convict life, reform experiments and the island's use as an isolated place of punishment. The contrast of these Georgian-era buildings against the island's wild beauty is striking. Coastal blooms, kangaroos and wombats gently nudge one onto a path of introspection.

TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEYS

Pursuit of happiness in Finland

SHASHIKALA RAGHUNATH

If someone had asked me about my choice for an ideal holiday, Northern Europe — and specifically the Nordic countries — would never have made the list. And yet, I agreed to a Finland holiday, hesitantly, not knowing what to expect. We chose winter, the best season to experience its novelty and magic.

Our first stop was Helsinki. Even under a blanket of snow, the city was vibrant and full of life. Dressed in multiple layers, we explored the main streets and historic sights on a walking tour led by a friendly local guide. I quickly realised how child and senior-friendly the city was. Ramps, elevators, and warm, well-connected public transport made exploring easy for all ages. For first-timers like me, walking on snow wasn't easy — but with the right shoes and frequent café stops, my fears of slipping slowly melted away.

One highlight was the famous Christmas window display at Stockmann, Helsinki's landmark department store. The city had plenty to offer museum lovers, including a delightful Children's Museum for families with toddlers. What kept us energised in minus 17 degrees Celsius was the endless supply of hot chocolate and the delicious cinnamon buns — pulla — at local cafés like Fraser's and the whimsical Moomin Café. My favourite was the almond-flavoured laskiaispulla. Parks transformed into skating rinks and skiing tracks, with people of all ages enjoying outdoor activities. But nothing amazed me more than the sight of the Baltic Sea — completely frozen. People strolled across it, played ice hockey, and even skied on the frozen surface.

Northern Lights in Finland.

Magical Lapland

No trip to Finland is complete without experiencing Lapland. A short flight from Helsinki brought us to Rovaniemi, the Christmas capital of the world.

The main draw was the official Santa Claus Village. At the Post Office, we saw stacks of letters from children across the world. Walking across the Arctic Circle marker, I marvelled at the thought of being so close to the North Pole. The highlight was meeting Santa himself. We also explored the Pilke Science Centre, focusing on the natural wonders of the region.

Deeper into the Arctic

From Rovaniemi, we boarded a bus to Saariselkä, further north. Known as one of the best spots to see the Northern Lights, the village greeted us with a silence so profound it felt meditative. Towering snow-covered trees stretched endlessly, and the landscape was a true winter wonderland. At minus 30 degrees Celsius, the cold was more intense than anything we had experienced before. We stocked up for our stay and soon learned to appreciate the Finnish sauna — an absolute blessing after braving the icy outdoors. We had pre-booked a few activities, which turned out to be unforgettable. Our Sami guide, wrapped in traditional attire, welcomed us with stories of her culture. She introduced us to reindeer, offered us steaming mugs of glögi (mulled berry drink), and showed us a traditional Sami dwelling.

Hunt for the Northern Lights

The most awaited part of the trip was the Northern Lights. We were told sightings depended on clear skies and a bit of luck. We joined a guided tour one evening. The drive was meant to last three hours, but ended up as a six-hour one in search of the elusive lights. At first, the skies remained stubbornly dark. Further north, near Utsjoki, our patience was rewarded. The first arcs of green appeared, swaying softly across the sky. We stood in silence, mesmerised. Then the colours deepened — greens brightened into vivid waves, streaks of purple shimmered, and rare streaks of red lit up the horizon. For half an hour, nature put on a show so magical that we forgot the biting cold. We returned past midnight, exhausted yet exhilarated, grateful for what we had witnessed. Later that night, faint traces of the aurora danced outside our window. From hesitant beginnings to unforgettable experiences, Finland transformed my idea of a holiday.

The temptation to be part of the next food trend will perhaps grip us sooner rather than later but it helps to remind ourselves that nourishment need not necessarily be dramatic. Ranjini Rao calls for a balanced approach to food this year

You are what you EAT

Recently at work, I had the opportunity to put together a vegetable basket for a photo shoot, using whatever was growing and in season, from the permaculture garden: tender brinjals, slightly overgrown haricot beans, flat beans, still-green lemons and bright red bird's-eye chillies, a freshly plucked knob of turmeric, lush green bunches of mint and coriander, guavas and cherry tomatoes. There's something calming about the way our gardener tends to this lot, with his own processes in place, circulating different varieties of seeds and crops through the year, turning kitchen waste into compost and sprinkling neem-oil infused water on the leaves.

THE GREEN THEORY

We've spent most of 2025 reading, writing, worrying, celebrating, experimenting with food, predicting future ingredients, debating sustainability, and watching food trends appear and disappear with the speed of the scrolling landscape through the windows of Namma Metro.

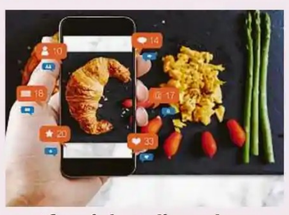
Yet here, surrounded by familiar vegetables and Basappa's brisk garden manner, the lure of all that fades. Food stands to be what it's meant to be: a steady presence, a reminder that nourishment doesn't need to be dramatic.

In the year gone by, in *The Green Theory*, I spoke about the expanding world of sustainable eating, including free-range futures, the ethics of what we put on our plates. I talked about looking at food as not just physical substance, but ecology, culture, politics, comfort. But there is one dimension we often neglect, which is how food affects the inner climate of our lives.

We don't talk enough about the emotional steadiness that good food habits offer. We ramble on about immunity, fitness, and sustainability, but mental well-being is often treated as a separate entity. Something that's managed through meditation, self-care routines, or therapy.

But nutritional psychiatry reminds us that the gut and brain are connected intricately. What we eat influences how we think and feel. Even as 2026 has just begun, the food world is already throwing up its next wave of fads and superfoods. The temptation to join the race will grip us, but perhaps this year is when we choose to stay committed to a balanced approach to our dietary plans.

(Ranjini is a communications professor, author, and podcaster, straddling many other worlds, in Bengaluru. She's passionate about urban farming and sustainable living, and can mostly be found cooking and baking in her little kitchen, where, surrounded by heirloom coffee kettles and mismatched tea cups, she finds her chi.)



If social media makes you anxious, filter out recommendations.

THINK BEYOND TRENDS

- Pause before you hop onto the trend bandwagon. Often, we give in to something new that everyone's talking about, but it's illogical when it doesn't align with our lifestyle.
- Put local and seasonal above exotic and imported. This should not just count as a moral rule, but as a practical one; your body recognises your native food patterns.
- Indulging in imported cheese you picked up on your travels isn't a sin, but distinguishing that from your regular local cheese intake is important.
- Resist extremes. Anything that demands sudden elimination or feels like punishment rarely supports long-term balance.
- If social media makes you anxious about food choices, customise them to suit your lifestyle and convenience.
- Consistency is key. Resisting the periodic superfood or superfad cycle puts you in charge of how you want to approach your eating habits.

Warm water infused with ginger can be soothing.

FOOD RITUALS FOR COMFORT

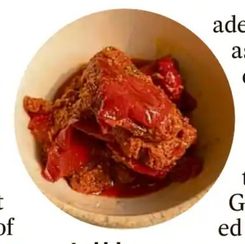
- Add more colour to your plate—this is good for gut microbiome diversity, which regulates mood.
- Stay away from screens while you eat. Sit and eat in silence, focusing on the flavours and textures of the food on your plate.
- A glass of ginger water or a simple herbal infusion at the same time everyday keeps your mood in check.
- Food may not solve all our problems, but it can keep us stable in a rapidly changing world.

A Banarasi flavour for every season

Varanasi's food culture is as deeply rooted in its soil as its spirituality. Ketki Gadre visits the city to get a taste of its famed GI-tagged foods

Banarasi paan.

My first evening in Varanasi wasn't spent at a temple or along the Ganga ghat—it began at a crowded chaat shop, with a swirl of aromas and the restless hum of hungry locals. As I moved past shops perfumed with edible souvenirs, and vendors calling out their GI-tagged treasures, it was clear that the city's identity lives in the ingredients, recipes, and artisans who have preserved them for generations.



Lal bharwa mirch pickle.

Chef Monu Singh at a luxury hotel in Varanasi sees this shift first hand. Cultural travellers are seeking authenticity and want to taste hyperlocal dishes. He says, "People don't just want dal–roti; they want to taste Ramnagar bhanta bharta and thandai because these are flavours they can't get outside Varanasi. The GI tags have made these ingredients easier to talk about."

Tiranga barfi.

(PHOTOS BY AUTHOR)

Winter specials

As winter chill settles over Varanasi, the city's ancient lanes thicken with aroma. In the mornings, the slow-cooked sweetness of Lal peda rises from sweet shops where milk is reduced over wood fire, stirred patiently into deep caramel hues. Beside them, trays of Tiranga barfi gleam under fluorescent light—saffron, white and green stripes neatly stacked. Third-generation halwai Ashcharya Yadav of the 100-year-old Shri Krishna Misthan Bhandar says, "A decade ago, hardly anyone asked for Tiranga barfi or red peda by name. Now tourists come in saying they've read about them or spotted them online. The GI tag has really boosted awareness—people want the authentic Banarasi version, not imitations from elsewhere."

Winter also brings out subtler flavours. Markets fill with Ramnagar bhanta, a tender, pale-skinned local brinjal known for its buttery texture. In kitchens, it is slow-roasted into a smoky bharta, its fragrance mingling with mustard oil and garlic. Alongside it arrives the sharp, ruby-red Chiraigaon karonda, whose tartness lends itself naturally to chutneys and pickles. These are the flavours that rarely make it onto commercial menus but remain staples of Banarasi home kitchens.

Chiraigaon karonda.

Spring and the city

In spring, the city leans into the coolness of thandai, a creamy blend of milk, nuts, saffron and pepper that fuels Holi festivities. Post-meal, the iconic Banarasi paan takes over as a fragrant ritual, a blend of betel leaf, gulkand, fennel and spices folded with the precision of an heirloom craft. This is also the season of plump, bright-red Lal bharwa mirch. Stuffed with spice mixes and submerged in mustard oil, they balance the city's festive indulgence with fiery intensity. In Thatheri Bazaar, pickle and papad shopowner Kush Bhalla arranges stuffed Lal bharwa mirch jars. His family has been in the business for five decades, but he says the last few years have been the most transformative. He describes how the chilli must be handpicked and sun-dried, then filled with a precise mix of spices and mustard oil. He says, "It's labour-intensive but the GI tag helps people appreciate that craftsmanship".

The monsoon fruit

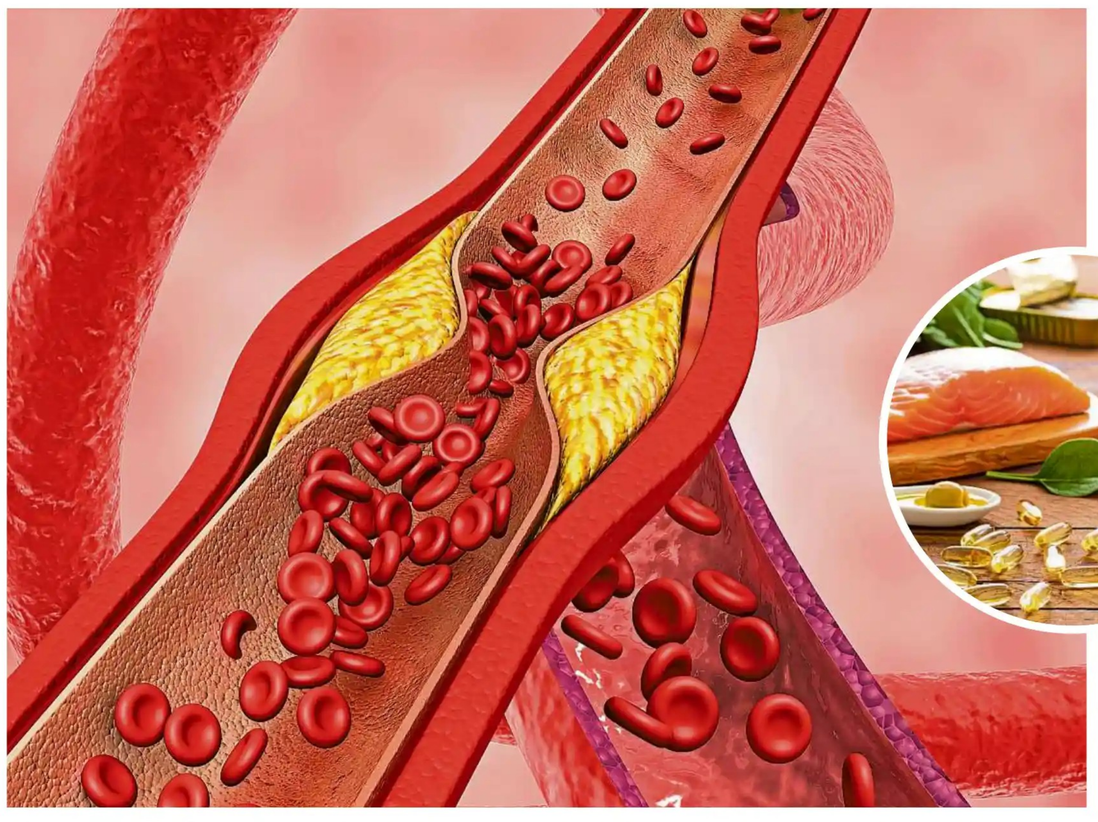
After peak summer, when the first rains arrive in June-July, Varanasi turns to its beloved Langda mango, one of its most celebrated GI-tagged foods. Juicy, aromatic and slightly tart, the fruit arrives by cartload into the markets. Families eat it plain, chilled or mashed into aam-ras, a tradition that endures no matter how many dessert bars open in the city.

To make its flavour last well beyond the summer, Gyanchand Murabbewale transforms the mango into pickles, murabba (sweet pickle), and aam papad—turning it into a year-round edible souvenir.

WHAT'S A GI TAG

A Geographical Indication (GI) tag is a certification that ties a product to a specific region, acknowledging that its flavour, characteristics or craftsmanship cannot be replicated elsewhere. In Varanasi, the GI tag has been assigned to over 32 products, of which are eight food items (Ramnagar bhanta, thandai, Lal peda, Tiranga barfi, Lal bharwa mirch, paan, Langda mango, Chiraigaon karonda).

Bid goodbye to bad cholesterol



Food rich in omega-3 is good for your heart health.

A new year is as good a time as any to take stock of your heart health. Jayashree Bafna breaks down the key components of the lipid profile, and offers nutritional tips on how to keep your HDL, LDL and triglycerides in balance

Cholesterol is often viewed with concern, especially when blood test reports flag high numbers. However cholesterol itself is not harmful. It is a waxy fat-like substance essential for several vital functions, including the formation of cell membranes, production of hormones and synthesis of vitamin D. The real issue lies not in cholesterol alone but in how it is carried in the bloodstream and how our daily food choices influence these pathways.

Cholesterol travels through the blood attached to proteins called lipoproteins. The three key components measured in a lipid profile are low-density lipoprotein (LDL), high-density lipoprotein (HDL) and triglycerides. Nutrition has a strong influence on all three.

LDL: the cholesterol that needs to be controlled

LDL cholesterol is known as "bad" cholesterol. Its primary function is to transport cholesterol from the liver to various tissues in the body. When LDL levels are high, excess cholesterol can deposit along the artery walls, forming plaques that narrow blood vessels and restrict blood flow. Over time, this increases the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Elevated LDL is often linked to excess saturated fat intake. Frequent consumption of ghee-heavy meals, butter, cream, malai, bakery items and deep fried foods such as samosa, pooris and pakoras can raise LDL levels. Traditional fats like ghee are not unhealthy but portion size and frequency play a crucial role.

HDL: the protective cholesterol

HDL cholesterol is often referred to as "good" cholesterol. It plays a protective role in heart health by helping to remove the bad cholesterol, LDL, from the bloodstream. Higher levels of HDL cholesterol are generally associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease as HDL helps prevent cholesterol buildup in arteries.

Diets rich in unsaturated fats such as those found in nuts and seeds such as almonds, walnuts, flaxseeds and sesame seeds, and cold pressed oils like mustard oil, ground nut oil and sesame oil when used in moderation are linked to improved HDL levels. Fatty fish like salmon, sardines and mackerel, rich in omega-3 fatty acids also contribute to better HDL function and overall heart health.

FOODS TO PICK

- Whole grains such as oats, quinoa, and brown rice, contain soluble fibre, which has been shown to lower LDL cholesterol. Incorporating these grains into your meals can help you achieve a healthier balance
- Fruits and vegetables, particularly apples, berries, citrus fruits, cabbage, gourds and leafy greens supply antioxidants and fibre that support heart health. Aim for a variety of colours on your plate to ensure a rich array of nutrients necessary for lowering LDL.
- Legumes like beans, lobia, chickpeas, black chana are rich in fibre and protein, making them a fantastic option for promoting good cholesterol levels while keeping bad cholesterol in check.
- Nuts and seeds including almonds, walnuts, and flaxseeds are excellent sources of fibre and healthy fats. They help to increase HDL cholesterol levels and lower LDL levels. A handful of nuts a day can significantly enhance your cholesterol profile.
- Fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids are beneficial for raising HDL cholesterol. Aim for two servings of fatty fish per week to optimise your cholesterol levels.

Triglycerides: the often ignored risk factor

Triglycerides are the most common type of fat in the body. A high triglyceride level combined with high LDL cholesterol or low HDL cholesterol is linked with fatty buildups within the artery walls, which increases the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Triglycerides are strongly influenced by excess calorie intake, particularly from refined carbohydrates and sugars. Frequent consumption of sugary drinks, sweets, white bread, polished rice and excess alcohol can sharply increase triglyceride levels. Managing triglycerides requires attention not just to fat intake but to overall calorie balance and carbohydrate quality.

Nutrition works best when combined with healthy lifestyle habits. Regular physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, managing stress and avoiding smoking further improve lipid profiles. Rather than fearing cholesterol, informed nutrition choices empower individuals to protect their heart health and build long-term well being.

(The author is a consultant dietician and diabetes educator.)

Avoid ultra-processed food to keep bad cholesterol in check.

FOODS TO AVOID

- Processed and fried foods often contain trans fats, which can significantly raise LDL levels and lower HDL levels. Opt for baked or grilled alternatives instead.
- Red meat can be part of a balanced diet; excessive intake can contribute to higher LDL levels. Choose lean cuts and limit consumption.
- Excess alcohol is a major contributor to high triglycerides.

HEALTH REMINDERS

The oldest of Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) turned 60 last year. According to a 2023 India Ageing Report by UN Population Fund (UNFPA), those above 60 will make up for nearly 21 per cent of the country's population by 2050. Healthy ageing, therefore, becomes a priority

If you are part of this demographic, here are some reminders to help you age in a healthy manner:

• Monitor your blood sugar levels

Get your fasting and post-prandial blood sugar levels checked. If you are a diabetic, don't skip your prescribed medications and ensure that your levels are within what is considered a normal range for your age. Maintain a healthy diet and stay away from sweet treats and high glycemic index foods.

• Get some regular exercise

Ensure that you get your regular dose of exercise. Even a regular 30-minute walk works wonders. A short 10-minute walk after a meal will lower your blood sugar levels and keep you fit. Seek your doctor's advice, and start some strength training, if you can as well.

• Take care of your bone health

A vitamin D crisis looms in India and not just among seniors; make sure you get a bone density test. Talk to your medical practitioner and see if you need supplementation. Experts say that UV-B exposure is important for production of vitamin D, so getting enough sunshine between 10 am and 3 pm helps.

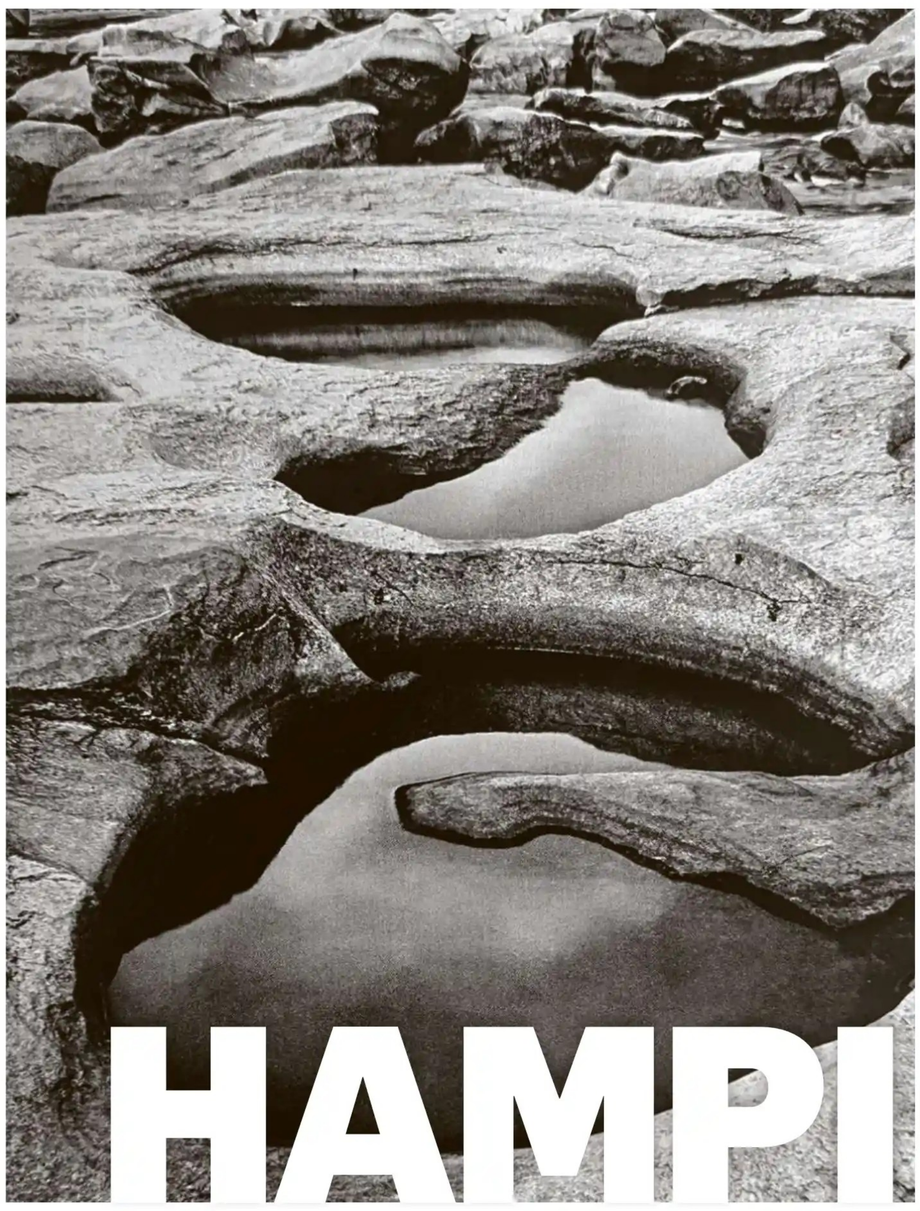
• Don't miss out on health screenings

Make sure you show up for that annual check-up, or the half-yearly one. Get yourself screened for cardiac issues, cancer and diabetes. An early diagnosis, timely treatment and lifestyle changes go a long way in managing all these health conditions.

• Cultivate a sense of belonging

A sense of community and belonging helps you cope with anxiety and loneliness. Participating in some way, small or big, in a book club, a knitting group or a music lovers' community helps you build connections and beat loneliness.

(Curated by Savitha Karthik)



DIFFERENT STROKES

HAMPI

Sombre reflections

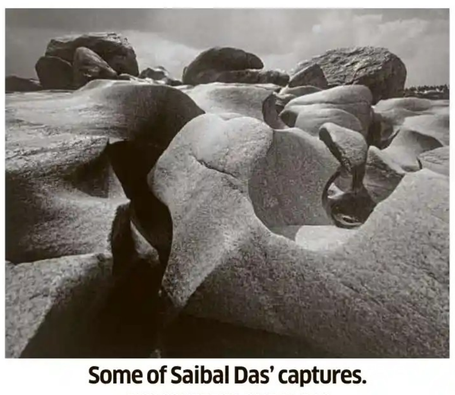
In his decade-long pursuit, award-winning photographer Saibal Das has captured stunning images of the ancient city in its glorious but sometimes grim stillness, writes Giridhar Khasnis

Photography arrived in India in 1840, just a year after its invention in Europe. The first photographic studios were set up in the Presidencies of Bombay and Calcutta. Expensive and cumbersome initially, the demand for sophisticated studios nevertheless grew with the expansion of trade and commerce. Colonel Alexander John Greenlaw (1818-1870), an officer of the British East India Company, was the first to photograph Hampi in 1856 and create a comprehensive photographic record of its ruins. His photographs captured the ancient city, which, since its plunder and destruction by the Deccan Muslim confederacy in 1565, had remained in a raw, overgrown state, frozen in time. Following Greenlaw's death in 1870, his negatives reportedly disappeared. Over a century later, in 1980, a retired British army officer, Eddie Gibbons, acquired around seventy waxed negatives from a descendant of Greenlaw, but was unsure of their subject matter. It was George Michell, a well-known British architect-academic and art historian, who identified the ancient negatives and linked them to the ruins of Hampi.

Michell, who first visited the site in 1973, had discovered that unlike most historical sites of that period, Hampi was not just another set of temples. "It's a complete city, a royal city. It has things in it that you don't find anywhere else, like palaces, stables, pleasure pavilions and military architecture."

Architectural splendour

The Melbourne-born, London-based scholar spearheaded the Vijayanagara Research Project, an international team of researchers dedicated to documenting and interpreting the Vijayanagara ruins. He brought in Australian photographer John Gollings (1944–) to photograph the Hampi ruins from the same perspectives as Greenlaw's pictures. In 1983, Gollings meticulously re-photographed numerous sites that Greenlaw had documented. Over the past four decades, Gollings' camera has captured and immortalised Hampi in thousands of images.



Some of Saibal Das' captures.
PICS COURTESY: SAIBAL DAS

"Hampi is vast, and its monuments are an architectural splendour," observes Gollings, whose work features in several national and international exhibitions. "Hampi has provided some of my most vivid images and experiences as a photographer and a person ... Though I have been visiting Hampi regularly, I come across a new aspect each time. There is no other archaeological site like Hampi." Declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1986, Hampi is famous as the last capital of the Vijayanagara Empire from the 14th to 16th centuries. Over 1600 surviving remains include forts, riverside features, royal complexes, temples, shrines, pillared halls, Mandapas, gateways, and watchtowers. It continues to draw a relentless stream of archaeologists, scholars, academics, artists, writers and ordinary tourists — not to forget treasure hunters.

Poetry in stillness

A recent addition to this ongoing fascination with the ancient city is Saibal Das' book, 'Hampi: The Rituals of Time' (published by BART, New Delhi). An award-winning photographer and photojournalist, Saibal's work has appeared in national and international publications, including *Time* magazine.

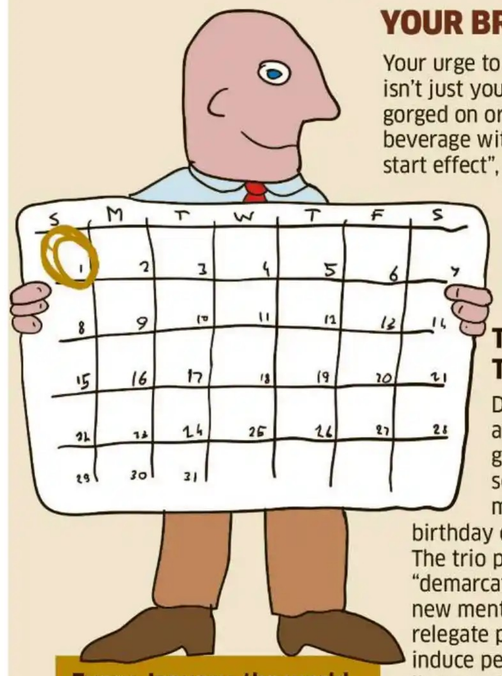
Saibal's tryst with Hampi spans over a period of 10 years. In his decade-long pursuit, he has spent weeks on end in the historic city, capturing images in both favourable and tough conditions. His book on Hampi is a reflection of his long-standing passion and commitment to the project. Far from being a pretentious tourist guide or an extravagant coffee-table book, 'Hampi: The Rituals of Time' is Saibal's expression of love — crafted with sincere commitment, patience, and deep understanding of the place that is both familiar and unfamiliar in diverse ways.

Saibal's choice of black and white medium is deliberate and compelling. It sets his pictures in a sombre mood, aiming to capture the essence of an intense space. In these images, the imposing presence of ancient rocks is complemented by man-made structures such as watchtowers, stepwells, stone walls and others. Human figures are seldom included; when present, they serve to emphasise the scale of ancient structures or the mighty rocks. In the most striking images, nature plays a significant role, featuring elements like darkened skies, drifting clouds, filtering sunlight, flowing waters, and whispering winds.

The dominant theme of these photographs is one of overwhelming silence and poetic stillness. There is not a hint of celebratory noise or simulated exuberance. One can sense a deep contemplation and even a tinge of melancholy in the images. Ancient monuments are often characterised by a texture that highlights the effects of weathering and erosion. Saibal's images are filled with such surfaces, abstracted remnants, and historical grazes.

That said, some readers may find the overall collection of photographs in the book to be excessively intense, personal, intimate, and even grim. Others might feel that a respectful but critical distance between the subject and the camera would have probably fostered an even more reflective understanding and viewing experience.

ESOTERICA *A monthly exploratory infographic for the always curious*



YOUR BRAIN ON JANUARY 1

Your urge to start, quit, or organise in the new year isn't just your guilt about the plum cake you have gorged on or all the times you have od'ed on food and beverage with friends. It is something called the "fresh start effect", a phrase researchers Hengchen Dai, Katherine L Milkman, and Jason Riis coined in their influential 2014 study titled "The Fresh Start Effect: Temporal Landmarks Motivate Aspirational Behavior".

The "Fresh Start Effect" and Temporal Landmarks

Dai, Milkman, and Riis cited Google data and gym-attendance records to show that gym visits and diet-related searches soared around the new year because our minds use dates like January 1, or even a birthday or a Monday, as "temporal landmarks." The trio postulated that these landmarks "demarcate the passage of time, creating many new mental accounting periods each year, which relegate past imperfections to a previous period, induce people to take a big-picture view of their lives, and thus motivate aspirational behaviours".

Simply put, temporal landmarks act as a powerful psychological separation between our imperfect past self and our future, aspirational self. We tend to mentally file away past failures in an old chapter and give ourselves a "clean slate". This cognitive trick boosts our motivation and optimism, making difficult goals feel attainable.

Every January, the world performs the same ritual. Run more, scroll less, eat better...new habits, new promises. But what is it about the dawn of a new year that fills us with such resolve? Is this fixation on "fresh starts" truly a motivational wisdom, or is it just a neural oddity in our brain? Let's explore...

WHY HUMANS ARE OBSESSED WITH NEW BEGINNINGS

We trust the calendar more than ourselves

Our need to use temporal landmarks for a reset is evolutionary. Much before calendars and planners were invented, humans across cultures and civilisations used harvest festivals, solstice feasts, and rituals as "clean-slate" metaphors. Psychologists believe this instinct evolved as a communal coping tool. Ending and restarting time frames helped societies deal with uncertainty – death, harvest failure, or political change – through ceremonies that promise continuity.

DO YOU KNOW?

Fresh starts are big business

The modern economy aggressively monetises temporal landmarks. Gyms earn a disproportionate share of annual sign-ups in January. Productivity apps, planners, habit trackers, detox programs, and "30-day challenges" are deliberately marketed around fresh start dates. The calendar isn't just psychological – it's commercial infrastructure.

The best resolution might be a system, and not just a fresh start date

Never mind the brain's burst of January optimism, we know both empirically and anecdotally that most resolutions get abandoned by February as vague, lofty goals clash with unchanged daily environments. However, behavioural scientists say the fresh start effect will work well if we also build a "choice architecture" alongside. What this means is we can tweak our environment to make good choices easier and bad ones harder. For example, using smaller plates at meal time will force us to eat less.

TEXT & DESIGN: SIDDHARTH MOHANTY | Key Source: faculty.wharton.upenn.edu

POT-POURRI

A final home for aprons

One July day in 2011, the Apron Museum in Iuka, Mississippi, received a small bib apron shaped like a rabbit, its frame embroidered with front paws mischievously digging into two sewn-on pockets. The apron arrived with a typed letter from its 81-year-old owner, Nelda Young, who lived in Jacksonville, Florida. Young's aunt had made the apron for her in 1934, when Young was four and living in Kansas. For decades, she had kept it wrapped in tissue in a drawer.

"I simply could not think, after my demise, of it being tossed in some trash pile," she wrote. Of her four children, seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren, "nobody wanted to give my bunny apron a home." Fortunately, she'd recently read an article about the little museum dedicated to aprons.

Inside the museum. NYT PIC

"There was a need for a place to send all these aprons before we started," said Carolyn Terry, 74, who founded the museum with her husband, Henry Terry, 73, in 2006. "We're meeting that need."

The stout brick structure, on a quiet street two hours east of Memphis, Tennessee, and bookended by church steeples, houses some 6,000 aprons dating back to the 1860s. Displayed on walls, mannequins and racks and draped on clotheslines from the tin-print ceiling, the collection runs the gamut.

Few objects have endured alongside humankind like the humble apron, cradling eggs and catching sauce, ale, paint, oil and blood. Their designs follow fashion and reflect how the economy was faring during different eras.

NYT

MUSEUM MATTERS

A few of the exhibits at the museum. PICS COURTESY: TWF

Kalabhoomi: A walk through living heritage

More than just a museum, this creative space offers an enriching experience of Odisha's artistic traditions, where craft is both preserved and actively practised, writes Sujoy Dhar

Nestled in the heart of Bhubaneswar's creative corridor, Kalabhoomi captures the essence of Odisha's rich artistic heritage. Dedicated to the state's master artisans, the museum celebrates handloom and handicraft traditions through a thoughtfully curated display of breathtaking craftsmanship.

Built using authentic local materials, the museum's architecture sets the tone even before one steps inside. Its laterite stone exterior, reminiscent of some of Odisha's oldest monuments, creates an immersive cultural experience from the moment visitors arrive. Kalabhoomi is organised into two distinct zones: a display area and a live section. The display galleries present a comprehensive survey of Odisha's handlooms and handicrafts, while the live section brings these traditions alive through workshops, performances and direct engagement with artisans.

The galleries

Stepping into Kalabhoomi feels like entering a living archive of Odisha's artistic soul, where each gallery unfolds a distinct chapter of the state's craft legacy.

From the Dhalapathar parda fabrics of Khurda district to the intricate appliqué work of Pipili, the exquisite Khandua and Ikat textiles, and the tribal weaves of Habaspuri and Kotpad, each textile tradition finds its own space and narrative within the museum.

Beyond textiles, dedicated galleries explore Odisha's diverse craft forms. Silver filigree from Cuttack, Lanjia Saura tribal paintings, and stone carving inspired by the Sun Temple at Konark sit alongside one another, revealing the breadth of the state's artistic expression. The Terracotta Gallery greets visitors with an earthy warmth — an ode to potters who shape cooking vessels, votive figures, Puri clay pots and painted toys. The Tulsi Chaura, echoing temple architecture, reinforces the spiritual undercurrents that run through everyday craft practices.

The Traditional Painting Gallery bursts into colour, tracing a journey from ancient cave murals to refined styles such as Pattachitra and Oshakothi. Palm-leaf manuscripts, wooden masks, dowry chests and vibrant Jatri Pattis add layers of cultural memory to the visual experience. In the Stone and Wood Carving Gallery, fragments salvaged from lost temples of Bhubaneswar and doors from traditional homes evoke the grandeur of Odisha's architectural past. The Natural Material Crafts Gallery highlights the ingenuity of rural Odisha, where nothing goes to waste and everything becomes craft. A vivid "tribal village" unfolds in the Tribal Crafts Gallery, where ornaments, tools, attire and household objects reflect the daily lives and rituals of Odisha's diverse tribal communities.

The spiritual heart of the museum lies in the Crafts of Shree Jagannatha Culture Gallery, where ritual clothing, brass and bell-metal objects, sacred earthenware, rare Pattachitra paintings, and costumes of Mahari and Gotipua dancers recreate the devotional universe surrounding the holy Trinity. The journey culminates in the Handloom Gallery, where 114 sarees from across Odisha, each embodying distinct motifs, traditions and labour-intensive weaving techniques, hang like stories in fabric form, offering a breathtaking finale to the museum experience.

The live section

Equally compelling is the live section, which includes an open-air theatre and dedicated workshop spaces where visitors can interact with artisans, observe techniques up close and even try their hand at making something themselves.

Among the most inspiring experiences are the "living craft" encounters. In the terracotta workshops, artisans demonstrate how raw clay transforms into pots, figurines and decorative objects, while visitors are invited to sculpt their own souvenirs. Such immersive engagement turns a museum visit into a hands-on exploration of Odisha's creative lineage.

TWF

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